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THE

INFLUENCE OF CATHOLICISM

ON THE

SCIENCES AND ON THE ARTS

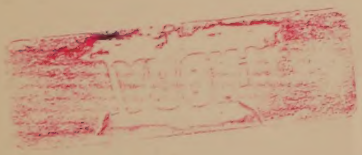
FROM THE SPANISH OF THE

REV. DON ANDRÉS DE SALAS Y GILAVERT, D.D.

KNIGHT HOSPITALLER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
CHAPLAIN TO HIS EXCELLENCY SEÑOR DON NARCISO DE HEREDIA Y PERALTA
COUNT DE DOÑA MARINA

BY

MARIANA MONTEIRO



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TO THE

VERY REVEREND ALFRED, CANON WHITE,

DEAN OF WESTMINSTER AND RECTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, BROOK GREEN,

I dedicate

THIS LITTLE WORK AS A SMALL TRIBUTE OF

RESPECT, ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE.

M. M.

Jun 13 30

"*A Faithful Friend is a strong Defence, and he that hath found him hath found a Treasure.*"—ECCLESIASTICUS, vi. 14.

EXAMEN AND APPROBATIONS.

TRANSLATION.

We, the Licenciate Don Fulgencio Gutierrez y Colomber, Priest, Knight of the Grand Cross of the Royal American Order of *Isabel la Catolica*, and Ecclesiastical Vicar of this Most Loyal City of Madrid and its environs,

By these presents and by what concerns us, we grant our licence to permit the printing and the publication of the little book entitled *Influence of Catholicism on the Sciences and on the Arts*, written by the Presbyter Doctor in Divinity, Don Andrés de Salas y Gilavert, forasmuch as we have examined it and have found nothing contrary to the Catholic Dogma and wholesome morals, according to ecclesiastical censure.

Dated Madrid, 27th September, 1877, and signed by the Licenciate Gutierrez by command of his Excellency the Licenciate Juan Moreno Gongalez (here follows the seal).

NOTICE.

Although I have submitted these articles to the examen, censure and approbation of the Ecclesiastical Authorities, and I have obtained their permission for their publication, I desire to state emphatically that it has been my wish and aim to print nothing that could offend the Catholic Dogma and morals. Should any such word be found, I beg of my readers to consider it as though it had not been written; and from this day and for ever I submit this little work to the correction of the Holy Catholic Church.

Dated Madrid, September, 1877, and signed Andrés de Salas y Gilavert, Chaplain to his Excellency Señor Don Narciso de Heredia y Peralta, Count de Doña Marina.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It seems incredible that in the so-called enlightened nineteenth century there should have been found a single person to attempt to maintain that the Catholic Religion is hostile to the arts and sciences. It must needs be that such a person simply closes his eyes to history, in order to make so rash and unjust an accusation. The modern philosophers, supporting their accusations upon some texts of Holy Scripture, and of the Holy Fathers falsely interpreted, have no hesitation to repeat daily with insolent superiority of manner: "*Is it not evident that the Catholic Religion is opposed to the unfolding of intelligence?*"

The attack could not be more gross or more insidious. Time has proved the charge to be an absurd accusation, and the truly learned men of the day are fully convinced that the Holy Catholic Religion is superior to all others, not only on account of the resplendent lights with which she has adorned the world, but for the extraordinary and incontestable progress which she has so brilliantly effected in human reason. I shall proceed to examine and

refute the charge of the Rationalistic philosophers, and clearly manifest the utter want of foundation of their accusations, because no loyal Catholic can possibly allow such grave accusations to remain uncontroverted.

When the Divine Word took flesh in the purest womb of the Queen of Angels and of men, assuming our human nature, the object of His highest mission was to ransom the world; but He could not re-establish between the Creator and the creature the close relations which sin had destroyed, without restoring all things, according to the forcible expression of the great Apostle. Hence He planted upon earth the germ of all knowledge, full of power and truth.

When He planted the beautiful tree of knowledge —a tree which later on under the influence of Catholicism was to assume gigantic proportions, extending its splendid branches towards all the various parts of the world, summoning all men to come, and taste, and be delighted with its delicious and wholesome fruits—this tree was no more than an imperceptible seed. And in truth what was our Divine Religion at that epoch? A cross raised up on the heights of Calvary; the Son of a Carpenter expiring on that cross; a few women weeping and imploring mercy at its foot; some doubting Disciples deficient of courage, and who fled away from the smallest persecution—such was the first spectacle that was

presented to the eyes of the world by Christian society. But very quickly did the humble Redeemer of men rise glorious from the sepulchre, and like the Good Shepherd that He was, full of tenderness, He called together His loved flock which had become dispersed. He laboured to convince His still vacillating Apostles of the truth of His triumphant Resurrection; He enlightened more and more their rude intelligences, purifying their carnal hearts, and then He ascended to heaven, blessing them, promising to send down the Holy Spirit. The Divine promise of the Son of God was not delayed in being accomplished.

The spirit of wisdom and fortitude descended upon the Apostles. Those hitherto ignorant, timid men, feeling a Divine fire which enlightened and transported them, dispersed and went to all parts of the world to convert the nations and peoples to the Holy Doctrine of Jesus Christ. The Disciples necessarily experienced the same fate as their Master. Like Him they fell victims to many and cruel persecutions. But over the still smoking blood of those heroic leaders of Christianity others rose in huge numbers, penetrated by the same spirit, and who went forth to propagate the Gospel throughout the globe. Amazed at the rapid progress effected by the new religion, the powers of the whole world leagued together to smother it in its birth, and persecution broke out on every side. The faithful were compelled to celebrate

their grand and sublime mysteries in the gloom of the Catacombs; they did not appear in public but to serve as food for wild beasts, or as cruel prey to the tyrants who were more ferocious still than the wild beasts. Such was the second spectacle which was offered to the world by Christian society.

At this moment there undoubtedly came over human intelligences an extraordinary change. From the instant when the Divine Jesus preached His most holy and excellent doctrine in Judea, was not the loftiest wisdom heard there? Should we not wish to mention the Master Whose superiority is incontestable, were the Apostles perchance men deficient of eloquence whose wise, impressive words convinced so many thousands of Jews and Gentiles? Were they bereft of talents, those evangelists who are so greatly admired, and who have left us books of a sublimity and elevation of thought which no human understanding has been able to excel or even reach, and of such depth and power that the most critical have been unable to find the smallest blot? Were the first successors of the Apostles obscure men of no intelligence that they also succeeded in converting to the most profound dogmas, and to the most austere of morals, whole cities and peoples bred up and accustomed to an easy sensual religion?

If our holiest religion, which numbers nineteen centuries, has conquered all the powers of the world,

dominated the most rebellious spirits; if it has poured abundant and refulgent light even over the less elevated classes of society, and filled Europe as well as the rest of the world with notable monuments; to dare with such hardihood to assert that the Catholic Religion is opposed to the unfolding of intelligence is to dare to contradict evidence, and equal to daring to confound truth with error, light with darkness, Christ with Belial.

In order more fully to demonstrate the falsity of this unfounded charge, let us call to mind the multitude of great and privileged minds that have been formed in the bosom of our Divine Religion. What a magnificent continuity of illustrious personages is presented to my mind during the first six centuries of the existence of the Catholic Church! St. Justin, Platonic philosopher, most admirable and worthy of all praise for his wisdom and clear intelligence, yet lays down at the foot of the Cross the vain wisdom of the schools, embraces the tenets of the Holy Gospels, becomes her great Apologist, and ends by being her true martyr. Tertullian, born in the depths of Paganism, gifted with a noble, fecund genius, deeply versed in jurisprudence, in fabulous antiquities, and in the principles of all the philosophical sects. St. Clement of Alexandria, who, possessed by an immense thirst for knowledge, traversed Greece, Asia, Syria, Egypt, visiting in all these places the most renowned men and those most

deeply read in all beliefs, and finished his travels in Alexandria. Here he dedicated himself to the study of religion, and became the president of the Christian Academy established in that city—a celebrated school, where, according to St. Jerome, succeeded an uninterrupted line of masters, full of learning and virtue, equally conversant with sacred writings and secular literature. It was here that St. Clement composed his great works, among others his *Admonitiones ad Gentiles*. From this school issued historians in all ages and of all nationalities, philosophers in all branches, poets of all languages. Origen, who at the age of eighteen was already a distinguished sage, the first shining light of his time, and the admiration of the Pagan philosophers. St. Jerome tells us that the celebrated and illustrious Origen was well versed in dialectics, geometry, grammar, rhetoric, and in the philosophy of all the schools.

To these great sages, defenders of holy religion, it will be expedient to add others, in order that modern sophists should be convinced of the truth of what I advance. Theophilus of Antioch, Arnubius, Lactantius, surnamed the Christian Cicero, Minutius Felix, who distinguished himself in Rome by his eloquence, and who, after he had embraced Christianity, composed for his defence a beautiful dialogue, which is still carefully preserved. To recall the names of St. Irenaeus, St. Cyprian, St. Basil, St. Ambrose, St. Athanasius, St. John Chrysostom, St.

Hilary, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great, and others, is to call to mind men of great eminence, whose excellent works are consecrated by the veneration of ages.

I might still longer linger in the just and well-merited praise of the great and excellent men who so brilliantly illustrated the world during the first ages of the Catholic Church, but I consider it would be a difficult and needless task to attempt unfolding, within the narrow limits of a small book, a subject which is found so clearly developed by all the Apologists, and the perusal of which I recommend to the consideration of our obstinate adversaries, so that they may become more fully convinced of the falsity of their charges. In order that they may not urge that these eminent men were already renowned before they embraced Christianity, I will tell them that there are existing documents which prove that the greater number were formed in her glorious bosom. I admit that there have been some who had acquired celebrity previous to becoming adopted sons of Jesus Christ, but can these followers of the *Goddess of Reason* deny that they became much more eminent after their conversion, and that, entrusted with the defence of the Holy Catholic Faith (Fountain of Divine Light), they rose to a height, and attained a name and renown, which, outside the pale of religion, it would have been impossible for them to have attained?

In order to bear out this statement, I wish to mention merely a few of those who became most renowned. What would St. Justin have been if to his title of philosopher had not been added that of Christian? What of Tertullian, had he not with his rare genius defended the holy cause of our Divine Religion? Simply a clever jurisconsult, whose reputation would scarcely have extended beyond his country and his age. What would St. Ambrose have been had not his singular talents and great eloquence become developed in the Christian pulpit? An incorruptible magistrate, whose name would never have been handed down to our days.

What shall I say of that splendid luminary of the Church, the glory of mankind, the most celebrated of the fathers, the illustrious St. Augustine? What would have become of his rare talents had he not faithfully interpreted the Sacred Scriptures, had he not so admirably written the *City of God*, had he not revealed to the world his ardent heart completely transformed to the Catholic faith?

Eloquence and letters imparted at this memorable epoch a most vivid lustre to Christian society, Nevertheless, the Roman Empire was rapidly becoming engulfed on all sides, and along with it the civilised world, which it enclosed within its boundary. There was no possibility of cultivating the sciences and the arts; the sceptre of the world was held in the fearful hands of ignorance and brutal force; the new

civilisation which Catholicity presented to the world had scarcely illumined the earth with its brilliant light than it suddenly disappeared, and sank, buried in the most appalling darkness.

What could our holy religion work in those days of sad memories? Conceal, preserve the sacred fire of science, as she preserved that of faith, within her inviolable asylums; impel her worthy ministers, her most loved sons, to follow an assiduous study, far from the tumult of warfare and of the passions; improve the gross and rude customs of the barbarians, and accustom them to love a life of peace and order; teaching them to respect, as sacred things, the double deposit of the Divine and the human thought, the venerable objects of worship and of science, which the terrible hordes of evil men were taking a pleasure in destroying. Meanwhile that a senseless conqueror was razing to the ground, with sacrilegious hands, the magnificent works of religion and of science, those admirable men, those staunch true lovers of our Lord and our God, would preserve them carefully within their temples and monasteries.

All those who have no more than a superficial knowledge of history must admit that the men who more greatly distinguished themselves in the Middle Ages were formed under the immediate influence of the Catholic Religion; and certainly these eminent men were very superior to the sickly idea conceived by the Sophists.

Was not the illustrious Bernard a superior man, who, from the depths of his retreat, moved the whole world by the power of his eloquent words? Was not the sympathetic and profound author of the *Imitation of Christ* a man of superior attainments, and worthy of all praise, whose modesty was superior to his science, because, despising that vain glory which is so ardently sought after by the world, he left to posterity sublime and inimitable thoughts without affixing his name to the work? What shall I say of those celebrated founders who alone, and at the foot of the Cross, have traced out constitutions that have never been superseded, nor even equalled, by public constitutions, largely elaborated by our own most brilliant statesmen; and what of those theologians, those jurisconsults, who have treated fundamentally great religious and social questions, which have scarcely been altered by our most distinguished statesmen—were they perchance not men of mark? From the time when order was restored and peace established in that land corrupted and overturned by evil passions, are we not amazed to see issuing from the bosom of the Church the first rays of that refulgent light that dissipated the darkness which covered the horizon of the world, and crowned with glory and splendour the whole of Europe?

What fertile and extraordinary geniuses have appeared in Christian society since that epoch down to our day! In the intellectual and metaphysical

sciences, and in philosophy, what renowned men have risen up before us, such as Bacon, Descartes, Pascal, Malebranche and Leibnitz! What men so learned in all human knowledge as Erasmus, Usserius, Baronius, Mabillon, Petau, Bochart, Vossius and Fleury!

What depth of doctrine in those statesmen, jurisconsults and magistrates, such as Thomas More, Talon, Grotius and Donat! What singular geniuses, what rare intelligences, what poets, orators and writers are conjured up on pronouncing the names of Tasso, Bossuet, Fénelon, Bourdaloue, Massillon and La Fontaine! In the natural sciences, in physics and mathematics, what brilliant names are those of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Réaumur and Euler! Were I to mention all the great politicians, all the excellent artists, and all the sages who were Christians, and even highly religious, what a beautiful list of illustrious names I should have to present to the discomfiture of our insidious adversaries!

Yet, how can I resist mentioning the glory and sanctity of Spain, those intellects that so greatly distinguished themselves for their learning, and reflected so much honour upon our country? How can I cast to the winds the sweet recollections bequeathed to us by the immortal St. John of the Cross, that Spanish saint who filled with splendour a whole century? How forget St. Teresa of Jesus,

she who has been styled by an eminent orator of our day, "*the matchless pride of our country, Chaste Lily, which has filled with fragrance our barren fields; a wondrous maiden, who has communicated to our letters the most noble efficacy which can be conceived by genius, the efficacy of rapture and ecstasy, the efficacy of the wonderful elevation of a boundless love*"?

For the consideration of these modern Rationalists and godless accusers, I place before them the excellent works of the humble cripple of Lepanto, the illustrious author and Christian philosopher, our immortal Cervantes, he who, with native simplicity and extraordinary eloquence, has said: "*Our works must never go beyond the limits imposed by the Christian Religion*".

Worthy of all praise are also the Listas, Saavedras and Gallegos, great defenders of the Faith, and excellent writers, whose works, like their virtues, fill with true enthusiasm the noble breasts of the faithful lovers of Catholicity. Nor in Spanish literature are less renowned those highly gifted men whom our holy religion nestled in her beautiful bosom, Suarez, Cano, Victoria, Luis Vives, Sepulveda, Soto, Maldonado, and the memorable Lope de Vega, who conferred so much glory and honour on faith and science. Justly did the great politician, the literary Fajardo, surname him *the Phœnix of Genius*.

Catholics! while we have before us all that is most great and sublime which, under the influence of

Christianity, has been produced by human intelligence, why should we be agitated by the rude murmurs of sophists, accusing us of being antagonistic to science and the arts? Let them know, although they may dislike to hear it, "*that in order to comprehend the value of Spanish letters, and admire their perfect synthesis and rare beauty, it is necessary to lift one's eyes to the Altar*". Such has been said by a wise foreign orator.[1]

In order to develop fully this most important subject it would be undoubtedly necessary to write several volumes. However, this one may suffice to confute the incredulous, and convince them clearly that, very far from our holy religion being hostile to science and art, she lends, and always has lent, them her powerful influence. When we feel in our intelligences the precious ray of light which emanates from the Divine Mind, with what rapidity are we elevated to the heavens!

In conclusion, I affirm, with the celebrated Pinard, that of all religions the Christian religion is the most poetic, the most humane, the most favourable to true liberty in the arts and letters; that the modern world owes all things to her, from agriculture to the abstract sciences, from the hospital to the temples erected by Michael Angelo and decorated by Raffaelle!

[1] Père Félix, *Conferences*, 1858.

PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION.

It is a well-known fact that many trees brought from foreign lands, and which are engrafted, or planted in English soil by botanists, produce abundant fruit; and this is true even of such as are supposed to be of small fruit-bearing power, because planted in a richer land or in contact with others of more perfect condition; and more especially is this the case if the tree of its nature comes from a noble stock.

In the same way have I ventured to transplant a Spanish work into English soil. No doubt many of my readers (should I be fortunate enough to have any) will wonder why, of all countries, I should have chosen England, with its depressing climate, to engraft a work, such as the present one, from the sunny clime of Spain; but this objection I will meet by stating that Spain, of all countries in Europe, is, and has ever been, the most Catholic—and not only Catholic, but one which has produced great theologians, world-wide literary celebrities and artists, century after century; in this, imitating the sun, which never stops

in its course yet always illumines—and, therefore, is the one most competent to write upon the *Influence of Catholicism on the Sciences and on the Arts.*

Some time ago I was asked to write a series of articles to refute the common error that Catholicism is, by its nature, opposed to the Sciences and the Arts.

Judging that my own pen would carry with it but small influence, I preferred to adapt and take my inspiration from the learned theologian whose name and dignity would be of sufficient power to render my translation acceptable.

MARIANA MONTEIRO.

St. Scholastica's,
Clapton, 1*st May*, 1900.

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FIRST ARTICLE.

FIRST ARTICLE.

SCIENCE.

Theology in general—Its definition and division—Arguments in favour of the Divine Authority of the Church.

WHAT is Science? "Science," says an eminent writer,[1] "is the conjunction of the relations which constitute and bind all creations, from God down to the atom, from the infinitesimally small up to the infinitely great. Each step, in following up this vast ladder, illumines the step which precedes it and the one which follows, because each comprehended relation, in whatever mode this comprehension is effected, from below to above, or *vice versâ*, is a revelation of That which Is. Or in other words, the effect manifests the cause, because it is an image of it; the cause explains the effect, because it is the beginning of the first. Nevertheless, this reciprocity is not equal, because, while the True Light descends from above, here below we have only a simple reflection. '*We see now through a glass in a dark manner,*' says St. Paul, '*but then face to face*' (1 Cor. xiii.). Science in our present state is, therefore, necessarily

[1] Lacordaire, *Mémoire pour le rétablissement en France de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*, 1839, p. 117.

imperfect, because we do not see *face to face* the starting point and the end—which is God. However much it may be manifested to our sight, it is not possible to know it but by the reflection which is contained in the inferior beings. Before God appeared He revealed His name. The voluntary acceptation of this Sovereign Word is called faith. Faith makes the Christian. When the Christian is in the possession of this new element of knowledge, from this point of view of the Highest he can descend even to the extreme ends of the universe, interpret from the relations which constitute the Divine Essence, those relations which constitute the essence of man and of nature ; after this, by the help of a *converse* movement, he verifies, by the laws which govern finite beings, the laws of the Infinite Being. This comparison of the two worlds—the illumination of the second, which is the effect, by the first, which is the cause, and the verification of the first, which is the cause, by the second, which is the effect: this flux and reflux of light, this current, which goes from the ocean towards the stream, and from the stream to the ocean ; faith in the science, and science in the faith—this constitutes the Christian who has attained to become a theologian." It is indubitable that this beautiful passage concerning science is one of the most lovely and most profound which human intelligence can produce, and one which opens to man an immense field for comprehending the whole extension which Theology embraces, which is the science of sciences.

What is Theology? Theology, according to the etymology of the word, is the same as treatise of God; it is, therefore, a word derived from the Greek *Theos*, which signifies God, and *logos*, which means treatise, or discourse. But, in an extended sense, we can affirm, with all the wise men of the world, that Theology is the science of sciences; the one which must necessarily embrace and contain all others; the one which pours upon all sciences a certain reflection of the Divine Nature. For which reason it is, with all propriety, called the *Science of God*, because God is the Being Who by excellence is the Being of beings, the One Who encompasses all in His immensity, the One Who shines in all the infinite perfections of His Sovereign and All-powerful Being, superior to all that exists or can exist.

"Theology," says the celebrated Maret,[1] "is the science of God, of man and of nature, in its most profound and mysterious relations. Carried on the wings of faith, and guided by the torch of the Divine Word, Theology soars towards the celestial world, from thence to contemplate the Divine Nature. Like Moses standing over Sinai, it contemplates, beneath the veil of the mysteries, the very laws of the Divine Being. Illumined by the celestial rays under the ladder of creation, Theology lights up, with that light which it has derived from the Eternal Focus, the diverse spheres which compose creation. Upon this inclined plane, it meets, in the

[1] *Théodicée Chrétienne*, Lesson 3, p. 70.

first term, with the world of pure spirits, of celestial intelligences. On the opposite extreme to this world it meets that of bodies, with their laws, their powers, the millions of beings which it encloses, pale reflections indeed, but reflections which bear the stamp of the eternal Beauty. Between these two worlds stands a third world, that of humanity, which participates of the one and of the other. These three worlds are joined one to the other and with its Supreme Cause, for an infinity of relations. These relations constitute two orders essentially different, but which, notwithstanding, are united in themselves and correspond in a magnificent unity—the natural and the supernatural orders. After this, from the work of God, springs the work of man. Then is unfolded the mixture of truth and error, of good and evil, which is what constitutes human history. But evil does not exist upon the earth, nor in humanity, excepting under the condition of its being combated and repaired. Only God can heal it, and to attain this end institutes a series of means which forms a new creation in the bosom of the first. Then all becomes complicated, but all things become exalted. Behold, here, the vast field of Theology: in it is found God and the Atom."

In the same way as man has need to know created beings, because he himself is a part of them, and all beings bear some relation to himself, in like manner, I repeat, does man require to know the Perfect Being, the Uncreated Being, and his Infinite Maker; because, without this knowledge, man would know not

from whence he came, nor where he is going, nor what is his high mission in this miserable exile. Wandering, in a certain sense, through the vast extent of creation, carried here and there by the ever-swelling wave of the generations, like a ship without a pilot to guide it on the large space of the ocean, he would not know where to direct his steps, nor from what shore he had started. From this we can perfectly understand the reason why our God and Lord was pleased to instil into our hearts an ardent desire and yearning to know Him.

Theology, in general, is divided into two branches, Dogmatic and Moral; both being necessary for the justification of man, because, in the same way as Dogmatic Theology teaches us the truths revealed by God, and which we are bound to believe if we desire to be saved, so does Moral Theology teach us those sacred duties we have to perform and the non-fulfilment of which would deprive us of attaining to the last End for which we were created, that is, eternal glory or final bliss. We cannot take a single step, in this world, without being reminded by our conscience of many and varied duties, but these duties we would be unable really to fulfil unless we believed firmly in the magnificent deposit of the holy and sublime doctrine which God confided to His Church, to whose infallible authority we ought to lend a complete submission, if we do not wish to become separated, like broken branches, and sent from the precious tree of Life, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, Who died to save the whole human race. It is

altogether impossible that there could be a just reason out of harmony with the incontestable and indubitable proofs of the Divine Authority of the Church, because these proceed, in the greater part, from actual and resplendent acts, patent to all.

Are not the thousands of miracles which have been performed under the clear light of heaven, throughout the world, evident and manifest acts? Is it not an actual fact, the admirable and exact fulfilment of the prophecies? Does it not prove, in a most conclusive manner, the Divine Authority of the Catholic Church, to behold the infinite multitude of martyrs, the great prodigy of its establishment, and the still greater prodigy of its preservation, in the midst of so many ruins which have been heaped up on its path, to witness the purity, the sanctity, the sublimity of its doctrines, and the heavenly life of all those who are obedient to them, with the excellent sincerity of generous and noble hearts?

The Divine Queen of intelligence, the Catholic Church, gathers around her the creatures she has been entrusted with, and holding in one hand the Sacred Scriptures, and in the other the holy Traditions, she tells them in sweet yet firm tones, "I have to announce to you wholesome truths which you would be unable to comprehend had they not been revealed. Listen with docility, all of you! There is an Eternal God, All-powerful, who possesses the plenitude of life. In Him there are three distinct Persons, being only One God, possessing the same Nature, which is communicated to Each without

there being the slightest alteration or distinction. These are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is the Beginning of the Trinity, the Son is begotten by the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son; it is the infinite love which the Father bears the Son and the Son to the Father; it is its reciprocal union, its common effusion. For One is the Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all One, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Ghost is uncreated. The Father is incomprehensible, the Son is incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost is incomprehensible. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Ghost is eternal. And yet they are not three Eternals, but one Eternal. As also they are not three Uncreateds, nor three Incomprehensibles, but one Uncreated, and one Incomprehensible. In like manner, the Father is Almighty, the Son is Almighty, and the Holy Ghost is Almighty. And yet, they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God." For as we are compelled, by the Christian truth, to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God, so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there are three Gods. The Father is made of no one, neither created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but

begotten. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So, there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after; nothing greater or less; but the whole Three Persons are co-eternal to One another and co-equal. So that in all things, as has been already said above, the Unity is to be worshipped in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity. He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity. Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the right Faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and Man. He is God of the substance of His Father, begotten before the world: He is man of the substance of His Mother, born in the world. Perfect God and perfect Man: subsisting of a rational soul and human flesh. Equal to the Father, according to His Godhead, and less than the Father, according to His Manhood. Who, although He be both God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ. One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the manhood unto God. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For, as the rational soul and the flesh are one man, so God and man are one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven; He sitteth

at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic faith, which, except a man believe faithfully and steadfastly, he cannot be saved.[1]

In the beginning God created heaven and earth.[2] He spoke and all things were magnificently made. We also are of the number of these creatures that have received existence from God, and whose life is renewed every moment at His bosom. Although He has, so to say, only granted to us an almost imperceptible part of space and time, we are in reality very great, because we were created to the image of God,[3] and our life will be continued in eternity. There is reserved to us for eternity the inexhaustible fountain of all happiness, because the infinite Mercy of God is rendered superior to the malice of men; because His Divine Son became incarnate, took upon Himself our weaknesses, and died on a shameful Cross, fully satisfying Divine Justice. Down then with all unbelief and despair, because by the death of Jesus have come to us the sweet and melodious songs of hope and of love!

[1] Symbolum S. Athanasii.

[2] Gen. i. 1.

[3] "Ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram" (Gen. i.).

Remember, ye modern Sophists, this part of Catholic Theology. Remember those poor fishermen, the holy Apostles, and all those whom our Lord Jesus Christ sent to propagate the Divine light of His Gospel throughout the world, which was then buried in the shadows of ignorance, of idolatry, and of barbarism! Remember those men who were so great, so wise, and so extraordinary, who by their vast science and tried virtues justly merited the renowned and glorious title of Fathers of the Church of God. What great and holy thoughts will ye find in all their works! What sublimity, what magnificence, what depth of reasoning, what eloquence in the writings of St. Thomas of Aquinas, the resplendent luminary of Catholicity! What deep, good sense, always impartial, always calm, ever closely united to truth, will ye find in that *Summa Theologica* of his, which has been compared by a celebrated writer[1] "to a majestic tree, coming forth from the sunshine, lifting up its head, and spreading the branches, unfolds flowers, and leaves, and fruits!"

The language of these great men cannot be compared with the language of the rest, because they speak with the authority which they have received from their Divine Master. It matters little how many, and what cruel persecutions they may have endured, or that the blood of their brethren and their own should have been spilt upon the earth, because, their heroic hearts, overflowing with a Divine and holy

[1] Maret, *Life of St. Thomas Aquinas.*

fire, being intrepid and stronger than persecution or even death itself, they calmly lifted up their heads above the many ruins which were spread around them, and made their voices resound in noble and salutary words, which were destined to consolidate and civilise all generations.

SECOND ARTICLE.

SECOND ARTICLE.

Conformity of Reason to Faith.

THERE are some men who pride themselves upon being truly Christian, yet were we to demand of each an account of his faith, the usual answer would be this: "I do not reason, but I wish to believe". Excellent language this, if it be properly understood, but in an ordinary sense, it manifests a very little faith and a hidden disposition to incredulity; because what does it mean to say "I do not reason"? If this supposed Christian knew how to develop properly the two sentiments of his soul, or would wish to frankly manifest them, he would acknowledge that this expression is equal to saying: "I do not reason, because, were I to reason, I should believe in nothing; I do not reason, because, were I to do so, my reason would present before me a multitude of difficulties, which would prevent my believing."

Those who think in this manner, can they make an assertion, without being in error, that they really possess faith? No; a thousand times no. It is necessary to investigate, but without overstepping the limits which the holy Apostle, in his letter to the Romans[1] imposes and points out to the first

[1] Rom. xii. 3.

Christians, when he says: "*For I say, by the grace that is given me, to all that are among you, not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety*". This is the pattern conduct which we ought to follow; this is the sublime lesson which we ought to study carefully: here it is where we must use our reason, as it is not permitted to us ever to say "I do not reason". Without this examen, without this exact investigation, we can never hold but a vague, uncertain faith, without principle and without consistency. "*Being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you*,"[1] as is taught and enjoined by the Prince of the Apostles.

But what is the basis or foundation of these great mysteries which religion reveals to us, and which are announced to us in the Gospel? In what do they consist? How are they realised? Here it is where reason must halt: here it is where reason must humble itself, and repress its natural curiosity, saying, "I do not reason, I believe". In effect, we would be unreasonable, and even criminal, were we not to believe all that our most sacred and Divine religion teaches us, whose strong reasonings and evident arguments have made us cognisant of truths which are so incontestable and indubitable, that by no means whatever can they be refuted.

Such is the conformity which should exist between reason and religion. Reason gives, let us so express

[1] 1 Peter iii. 15.

ourselves, the first steps, convincing and persuading us that Religion comes from God: that all the articles which it contains have been revealed by this same Supreme Lord, whether in the scriptures or in the traditions, explained and proposed to us by our Holy Church; that, whereas God is incapable of error, it is logically deduced that all that she has announced is invariably true; finally, that Religion, as it does not teach us aught but the Word of God and His excellent Name, is equally true and indefectible, and with most just and incomparable motives demands a perfect adhesion of our spirit and of our hearts. Behold here where Reason acts, and what we discover in favour of her beautiful and radiant lights!

This general principle established, Religion immediately exalts herself above Reason, expounds her truths, and, however hidden these truths may be, Reason submits to her without allowing it to penetrate her profound and mysterious dogmas. If Reason, from its indocility and pride, rejects these truths, then Religion, with her legitimate and infallible authority, places it beneath her yoke, and makes it see that it ought not to doubt absolutely anything of what she proposes, according to the rules marked by prudence, keeping it within proper limits, beyond which it must not stray, so that it should not wander about, delivering itself up to a diversity of doctrines, which would engulph it without doubt into the deepest chaos.

Therefore, our Catholic Faith is more firm without losing anything of its mystery; and it is more

mysterious without absolutely losing any of its firmness.

There are moments in life when a soul—however much it may be Catholic, and a faithful Christian—becomes interiorly agitated, and has doubts of faith, as was the case with the Prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, who, when standing upon the waters, was told by our Redeemer,[1] "*O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?*" Nevertheless, the soul does not really doubt; it believes in a vague, confused manner; but the impression is so strong on these occasions, that it appears as though the soul did not believe in anything. This is a difficult trial to sustain, but one which God permits in order to perfect our holy Faith, and engrave it fixedly in our hearts! If at any time, which God forbid, we should find ourselves assailed by such fearful temptations, let us implore the Divine assistance, and in imitation of the Prince of the Apostles, let us exclaim, "*Lord, save me*".[2] Let us summon to our assistance Religion and Reason, and these two powerful elements, which are intimately united, will influence us, and will lend us a hand to calm our agitations.

Our natural Reason will remind us of those great and excellent motives which ever impelled us to believe, and that have seemed the most proper ones for confirming in us more and more the Christian Faith, which we happily possess. To our reason,

[1] Matt. xiv. 31. [2] *Ibid.*, 30.

in effect, is presented the vast universe, with its countless multitudes of beings which compose it, filling us with admiration and astonishment at beholding its diversity, its immense extent, its beauty, its perfect order, its mutual dependence, its utility, its durability after so many ages, and its perpetuity! Our reason will lead us to contemplate the heavens, whose rapid movements are ever so precise and well arranged; the planets which afford us light, the prodigious number of stars shining in the firmament; the variety of seasons, succeeding one another in such a constant and marvellous revolution, and which perfectly divide the course of time! What but that precious and rich gleam of the Divinity leads us to traverse in thought, more rapidly than with the sight, those extensive tracts of land and ocean, which are like an inferior world placed beneath the celestial one? What fruitfulness! What varied productions do we perceive in this magnificent work of the Divine Creation!

Pondering and developing this thought, according to the rules marked by prudence and common sense, we shall very quickly observe that all that surrounds us is not, nor cannot be, the effect due to the vain and insignificant word called *chance*, as some impious men still pretend to maintain, obstinately, and with senseless zeal. Foolish man! Nothing absolutely could exist unless a Supreme Intelligence had given it the principle of its being. This Supreme Intelligence, this primary power, superior to all creatures, essential, independent of itself, the Sovereign Author of its

many and extraordinary beauties, is our God and Lord, whom we ought to love and adore with our whole soul, and with our whole heart. What is there more natural and reasonable than that the Creator should expect and demand of His creatures that just homage which is His due? What is there more natural and reasonable than that creatures should adore and glorify the One to Whom they owe their existence, believe in His precepts, conform to His will, practise His Holy Law, and dedicate themselves completely to His service? In this consists our holiest and Divine Religion, whose excellent truths no just reason can disqualify, nor ever disprove.

But should some bold man ask of us: "In what consists the mystery of a God made Man without ceasing to be God, mortal and immortal, uniting, in one and the same Person, all the splendour and glory of the Divinity; in what consists the mystery of one God and three Persons, and three Persons in one God; lastly, what may the dogma be of a God-Man, really present under the beautiful and mysterious species of bread and wine, in the Sacrament of our altars?" our holy Catholic Faith would then reply for us, in the words of the Omnipotent, when, with a powerful, strong voice, He said to the violently agitated sea: "*Hitherto thou shalt come, and shalt go no further, and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves!*"[1]

[1] Job xxxviii. 11. "Usque huc venies, et non procedes amplius, et hic confringes tumentes fluctus tuos."

THIRD ARTICLE.

THIRD ARTICLE.

PHILOSOPHY.

Its definition—The influence of Catholicism upon human thought.

What is Philosophy? Philosophy, according to the definition of the word, signifies *love of wisdom;* it is a word derived from the Greek *philos*, which means *love*, and *sofos*, which is interpreted *wisdom*. Philosophy, in its general sense, is the exercise of the reason, the activity of the human spirit, which has for its object the study of self; the investigation of secondary causes, which are, in their turn, effects of an infinite, eternal, absolute and necessary cause; the principle, and foundation of the knowledge of man, and of his duties towards God, towards himself and towards his fellow-beings!

There are not wanting senseless men who reject Theology and Philosophy as being unnecessary studies. What is Theology but the Divine Mind manifested to man through revelation? If you remove the Divine Mind, then will human reason very quickly abandon itself to all manner of disorders, and all kinds of crime, which it is capable of committing when left to itself. What is Philosophy but the thought of man, which is elevated and rises

even up to God, the inexhaustible spring of this very thought? Remove from the human thought the activity which impels it towards the Divinity, and then will the refulgent torch of faith disappear from our reason, leaving it in almost complete obscurity. It will happen to us as with the blind, who scarcely perceive, if they do at all, the luminous refulgence of the sun.

To deny the necessity of true Philosophy would be equal to denying the existence of God, which would, indeed, be a tremendous absurdity, because when the Omnipotent created man to His image and likeness,[1] He engraved upon his soul, with indelible characters, the idea of a superior Being; the absolute Creator of all that exists, or can exist, a most perfect Being! One that cannot be other than God Himself, nor Who can cease to exist, because the impossible is not, nor ever can enter, as a subject of thought. This Being must be an Infinite Being, Eternal, unless we wish to say that He existed in a time when there was nothing existent: a false supposition, a great absurdity, which would not occur even to an idiot, for even the most ignorant are aware that there cannot exist effects without the cause which produces them, for, on beholding a work, the first thing that occurs to man is the idea of the artificer.

These principles being admitted, there follows the undoubted fact that Catholicism exercises on Philo-

[1] "Ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram" (Gen. i.).

sophy, or on human thought, a great and beneficent influence. We have said already that Philosophy is the mind of man, which is elevated up to God, and that God is the absolute Creator of this thought, to whom man owes all his greatness, and his superiority, above all other creatures that surround him. By what else, if not by the mind, which the supreme Creator has conceded to man, is he constituted the King of Creation? By what, but by thought, does man give to matter all manners of form, adapting it to his needs, and making it produce marvellous effects? To what else, but to thought, does man owe the great dominion which he exercises over those ferocious and indomitable animals, by which he would be destroyed were he left to combat them simply with his own material powers? By what else, but by thought, illumined by the ray of light Divine, does man attain to rise to the sublimity of the heavens, penetrates the depths of the Infinite Majesty, and there, contemplating His Magnificent Perfections, experiences an indescribable joy, sheltered from all danger, unless pride and arrogance introduce corruption into the sublime and delightful fruition of the mind? Pride! Oh how many disorders has it effected and induced in human reason! How many falls, how many calamities, how many misfortunes has humanity to lament which have been caused by this sin?

The thought of man, fragile and limited, cannot immediately perceive the truth whilst he is still on earth, for, according to the Apostle St. Paul, the

most sublime mysteries are not impressed on the soul until the word of Jesus Christ touches the ear; and then, although a lively faith, deep and ardent, may keep it constantly in the presence of our Lord and God, man does not see Him *face* to *face* (*facie ad faciam*) as in the other life, but only in an enigmatical manner, and in the mirror of Creation. When these grave questions, which so intimately and greatly interest our souls, are presented to our consideration, such as the existence of God, the immortality of the human spirit, the difference between good and evil, the divinity of the Catholic Religion, the punishment of vice, the rewards of virtue, ah! with what ardour do we seek to dive into their depths for whole days together! How often do we shed bitter tears over the weakness of man, after we have endured that restlessness, that conflicting agitation, which produced many sleepless nights, during which we endeavoured to solve the difficulties which science presented before us! But what supreme pleasure, what untold joy, what exuberant delight did we not feel, when an interior illumination came to dissipate, with its bright and refulgent light, the cloud which dimmed our intelligence! With what rapturing enthusiasm do we not newly behold the sun of Truth, shining in all its splendour, before the soul's gaze!

The corruption of society is the most cruel enemy of the human spirit: After we have examined our own selves, let us call to mind, if for no more than a few moments, the teaching of history, and we shall be quickly convinced that, with individuals as with

sensual nations, they are, almost in every case, deficient, or rather, incapable of deep, great, energetic and sublime thoughts. Their Philosophy, if, in reality, they possess any, cannot be otherwise than gross, materialistic and sceptical, and not true Philosophy.

Our Divine Religion is the one which powerfully influences the complete unfolding of the power of thought. This tender, magnificent mother gently speaks to all her children: "Allow yourselves to be guided by the spirit, and never follow the desires of the flesh, because the flesh is always engaged in a constant wrestling with the spirit, and the spirit with the flesh; therefore, you ought to practise the wholesome fruits of the spirit, and overcome the repulsive desires of the flesh, and so be enabled to elevate the spirit up even to God, there to contemplate His Divine Perfections. To overcome the dismal desires of the flesh," adds this Divine Teacher, "it is absolutely necessary that you practise charity, patience, humility, perseverance, goodness, faith and all the other virtues."

The Catholic Religion not only enjoins—in order to think rightly—fasting, abstinence and the mortification of the passions, but also especially recommends to us humility, because the pride of man, if once wounded, agitates the reason, and encloses thought within the obscurity of a most darksome prison, and then it respects nothing, does not acknowledge rule or measure, and dares to refuse to God His first title of a Primary Principle, unwilling to give Him honour as to the Author of all good and

of all riches. Ungrateful man! I will say to him, in the words of the great Apostle: "*What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received: why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*"[1] The Sacred Scriptures are full of testimonies, where Jesus Christ exhorts us to practise humility and to despise that fearful and perturbing sin of pride. We should be always in intimate union with God, contemplating His Divine Attributes, and not be so rash that, full of pride in our miserable, weak state, there should be verified in us the words of the Gospel: "*He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat*".[2] The Holy Ghost assures us that "*God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*".[3]

It is an undoubted fact that pride is the vice which most cruelly agitates human thought, and for that reason does our sacred and Divine Religion inculcate the constant practice of humility. "*Blessed*," said our Divine Lord, "*are the meek: for they shall possess the land.*"[4] And He will fill them with blessings and will raise them up. Alas! for the proud and the presumptuous! For He will cast them down and will resist them. Jesus Christ presents Himself to us as a perfect model of humility, for He took upon Himself all our iniquities; He suffered and died, saying: "*Learn of Me, because I am meek, and humble of heart*".[5]

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 7. [2] Luke i. 51-2.
[3] James iv. 6. [4] Matt. v. 4.
[5] "Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde" (Matt. xi. 29).

The Christian Religion is the only religion which inspires in the humble mind, when that mind is bowed in most profound submission, not alone noble and generous thoughts, but even sublime, elevated ones, and of this truth there exist numberless examples to prove the assertion. Omitting many others, let us ponder what was the illustrious St. Augustine, with his rich store of excellent and beautiful gifts of intelligence and of heart, so long as he continued abandoned to his passions? Completely dominated by pride, it was not possible for him to take the flight which his lofty intelligence was impelling him to take until called by God through the continued and fervent prayers of his pious mother, and the winning and enrapturing eloquence of a Catholic orator: then his large capacity of mind became widened, his intelligence became enlightened, and his heart being filled with a Divine fire, he went forth like a glorious hero to defend the Catholic Faith, and was justly held worthy to bear the title of "*the Torch of Religion, Column of the Church, and the Glory of the human race*"! To this renowned father and doctor are we indebted for matters of the highest and purest philosophy, since it is he who has best known how to join this philosophy to our holy and Divine Religion, for he says: "We believe and we teach[1] that philosophy, that is to say, love of wisdom, and the religion of Jesus Christ are one and the same thing".

[1] St. Augustine, *Book of the True Religion.*

FOURTH ARTICLE.

FOURTH ARTICLE.

The necessity of the authority of Catholicism for restraining the wanderings of Reason.

We have stated that the thought of man constitutes his greatness, his high dignity, his felicity, his very life, and that our holy Religion powerfully influences the development of the mind by divesting it of its unbridled passions, and elevating it to high and sublime meditation. It now remains to prove the importance of curbing within bounds those vivid intelligences, which, actuated by a constant whirl of activity, assume, although in vain, to investigate all things, and to penetrate every secret, even what the Infinite wisdom has raised above our reach! Hence it is not to be wondered at that they should confound all things, overturn everything, and it is an indubitable fact that such as these would lead us into a universal scepticism, unless held back by an infallible and Divine Authority.

The state of ignorance into which man sometimes falls towards the end of his life appears to me to be far more deplorable than that which besets him on entering life. What is man before the brilliant and beautiful light of truth illumines his limited intelligence but an indigent, weak creature? For this

tender being there is no past and there is no future. His weak eyes only see the present, and even that present in a very narrowed way! If, on the one hand, he be deprived of the principal joys of life, on the other, he ignores its adversities and its miseries. He lives without trials and without solicitude. If, at times, he turns his tender, sweet looks towards the horizon of the intellectual world, it is like one who turns his gaze in the morning towards the East before the sun rises. A secret presentiment tells him of the happy, cheering advent of the beneficent planet which is to illumine his soul, and a thrill of extraordinary joy and true hope suddenly darts through his frame.

But how faithfully depict the sad state of the man who, after he had the happiness and joy of knowing the truth in all its brightness and splendour, yet loses this magnificent possession, because he attempted to gaze too near by the light of the intelligence? A fearful indifference to all objects of highest importance, an insupportable anguish caused by doubt, the crushing weariness of his bitter life—all this is the general experience of man when left to his own powers, with no guide than his own wandering reason. Full of pride he turns his steps away from following the firm, straight path of truth. At times he may perchance turn his languid looks towards heaven, but it will be a look without hope, because his eyes cannot be opened to behold the true light but with difficulty. Will there still be found men to offer their worship to Reason, choosing her in pre-

ference to the excellent and sublime truths which God Himself has revealed to us? What monstrous blindness! What an extravagant self-love that thus can turn against itself! Holy Religion is the only power that can place a wholesome curb upon that petulant, domineering Reason and save it from falling into the deepest abyss. This Divine Teacher of holy truths recommends us in the first instance to have diffidence in ourselves, and to consider the necessity of humility as the safest and firmest foundation of Dogma and Morals. Always holy, and ever infallible, she teaches us that we ourselves do not possess the principle of our existence; that it is only the Infinite Being, Necessary, Absolute, who holds the principle of His own existence, as also that of all other dependent beings; that we were created to the image and likeness of God,[1] but what a faint likeness, and what an imperfect image! Our intelligence is, relatively to the Divine Intelligence, what a handful of dust is to the lofty mountain whose top is lost in the clouds, what a tiny dewdrop is in respect to the vast ocean, what an imperceptible spark of fire, which is instantly extinguished, is in comparison to the resplendent focus of light which proceeds from the Infinite Goodness to enlighten the whole world, and which will not be extinguished but at the consummation of all ages by the Divine Breath of Eternal Justice.

What increases the obduracy of our intelligence

[1] Gen. i. 26.

is that, enclosed in the prison of the body, it does not perceive, excepting across the senses, the light of Truth, like a hapless captive buried in a dark dungeon, who cannot see the pale light of day but in an indirect manner, through a narrow grating.

This, then, is the state of man, such as is presented to us by our sacred and Divine Religion. From this results a most natural consequence, that is, that we are all obliged to oppose the frequent suggestions of our haughty reason, particularly when she attempts to instigate us to reject the sacred deposit of those sublime and wholesome truths which have been handed down to us by the unanimous traditions of the people, hallowed and received by all time, and before which the most singularly gifted and enlightened geniuses have bent in submission their glorious and laurel-crowned brows. Let not Rationalists and godless Sophists forget that the sweet, harmonious voice of Truth will not resound in their ears until after they have compelled their boastful, haughty reason to suffer a veritable and legitimate humiliation.

The most just, the most wholesome humiliation which human intelligence can experience is, evidently, that which the Christian Religion makes it feel. Religion teaches Reason a great number of truths, which fully satisfies it, but she also presents to it many which its limited light cannot comprehend, "*which offends it and rudely wounds it*," as Pascal expresses it. One God in three Persons; the Incarnation of the Eternal Word; the immolation of

the God Man upon the holy wood of the Cross for the profitable redemption of the human race; the Mysterious Sacrifice, which is renewed at every instant upon our altars; a God hidden, in order that He should become our nourishment under the appearance of bread, and which ceases at once to be bread; the salutary effects of grace upon the soul which does not abuse its liberty. Ah! what sublime mysteries are comprehended in the Catholic Symbol!

The magnificent knowledge and teaching of these Divine Mysteries are not less important or indispensable viewed from the Theological standpoint than viewed in the light of Philosophy. Nourishing Reason with the rich and wholesome taste for these excellent truths, repeating every moment to her that if she does not admit them and closely embrace them, there can be no possible salvation for her; then it is that Reason becomes awed and that Religion dominates her rebellions and represses her insatiable avidity for investigating everything. When in the pursuit of Science, which demands a great faith intimately united to the intelligence, human reason reaches the mystery, it humbly cries out: "Highest God! I who am the smallest emanation of Thy Infinite light, how shall I penetrate Thy incomprehensible magnificent Works?"

Unbelievers and Rationalists! Science, even that which is called profane, what is it but the clearest and most exact explanation of God in His beautiful Works?

A spectacle full of instruction and comfort to the believing Catholic is that which is offered to us by those extraordinary intelligences, who have no other resource left to them, in order to be delivered from absolute Scepticism, than our holy Faith. Ascending from question to question, and from doubt to doubt, they reach, fatigued, to the last step of the ladder, to find upon it nothing more than the nothingness of chimerical illusions! Still beholding from thence the Cross, mysteriously sustained by a Powerful Divine Hand, they go and rest at its foot, and draw comfort for themselves by looking up to heaven!

The truths of our Holy Catholic Faith are sufficient in themselves to nourish our intelligence! Do they not embrace all visible and invisible things? Do they not descend from the Supreme Creator down to the creature, from whence they impel us to rise up to the very heavens? To the Philosopher, as well as to the Christian, are addressed the sublime and eloquent words: "*But one thing is necessary*".[1]

Nevertheless, as religious truths are intimately united to mundane truths, if I may so express myself, from this it results that the intelligence, being constantly united to the truths of faith, equally admits other truths which it judged to be uncertain. Faith firmly and deeply implants on the shore of Salvation an anchor which Providence casts out to her from the heights of the heavens; then, advanc-

[1] "Porro unum est necessarium" (Luke x. 4).

ing courageously towards the abyss, which God leaves to our investigations, there becomes submerged and explores it in all its meanings. If at times the obscurity deepens around the spirit, if the winds blow violently and lash the waves, in sight of the abyss yawning before man he exclaims, with suppliant emotion: "*Lord, save me, lest I perish,*"[1] and his faith has saved him!

Tell us, O Pascal and Malebranche! tell us, ye extraordinary geniuses, was not this precisely that which befell ye? Desirous of resolving the questions which more vividly interest mankind, ye had descended to the most profound depths of reason, and boldly dared to sound the foundations upon which it rested! The ever-swelling waves of doubt invaded thy giant feet, and threatened to engulph ye! The reality of the bodies, the certitude of reason, life itself—all were manifested successively, like vague illusions, before thy wandering gaze!

Then you summoned the Catholic Faith to thy aid, that Faith which was so firmly rooted in thy souls, and, leaning upon her indestructible base, ye traced, with sure hand, those great and sublime thoughts which have been so much admired, and which have so delighted the world!

[1] "Domine, salvum me fac" (Matt. xiv. 30).

FIFTH ARTICLE.

FIFTH ARTICLE.

Continuation of the same Subject.

RATIONALISTS and Unbelievers! If you wrest Faith from the World, that Faith to which as a last resource Reason appeals to and may lean upon, I beseech of you to comprehend fully that the *goddess of Reason*, to whom you offer so much worship, will engulph you into the most horrible state of doubt, and will take you from error to error, from precipice to precipice, until you become buried in the deepest abyss! Consult the experience of all ages, appeal to the testimonies of the most powerful and the most enlightened minds!

Who was wiser among the Greeks than Socrates? Nevertheless, we all know what his end was, after having philosophised the whole of his life. He openly avowed *that he had learnt nothing else but that he knew nothing*. Who more erudite than Pliny among the Latins? Yet, after extraordinary labours, of which we can, with difficulty, form even a slight idea, he arrived at the same conclusion as the former sage, while this conviction of his nothingness wrung from him at the same time a cry of despair, very proper for confounding your pride! "*The only thing that is certain*," he said, "*is that there is nothing certain*,

and no creature is more miserable or prouder than man." If any one permits himself to affirm any one thing as certain, he undoubtedly falls into some gross error. As the elegant Cicero remarks, "*There is no absurdity which has not been uttered by some Philosopher*".

You state with arrogance "that Religion petrifies thought, that she is the great obstacle to human intelligence, and that she envelops Reason, like a mummy, in the grave-cloths of dogma and in the shadows of faith".[1]

What an unfounded and audacious accusation! Is it possible to offer a greater calumny against our holiest and most Divine Religion, to which we owe everything, and by which we are to obtain our eternal Salvation? Assuming that by such insolence you manifest your error, do you wish to know what our holy Religion does on this point? We have already said it, and in order to repeat it I will reproduce the very words of an eminent writer of our day: "Faith is not death, it is life"; "Justus autem ex fide vivit".[2] No. Faith does not confine genius in a dark prison, depriving it of space and light, nor does it convert into blind captives the kings of thought. But if it does not do so, you may say, what is it that it does do?

What does Faith do? Faith reveals before genius infinite horizons above the mists of her dogmas, and in regard to men who are not like owls, which instinctively seek the shadow and the night, but who

[1] Père Félix, *Conferences.* [2] *Ibid.*

soar high like the eagles, I know full well what Faith does in their regard—listen! In place of clipping their wings, she makes them soar in their flight; instead of bandaging their eyes, she conducts them to the heights of faith above the clouds which envelop the crowd of thinkers, and, placing them as though upon a rock over the immutable dogma, she opens a way for them to approach nearer to the sun!

The shadows which still hover around these men are like clouds tinged with gold by the light, and which, far from extinguishing the light, increase their ambition of beholding, free of all shadow, that sun which even from afar sends down upon them such magnificent rays. In the sublime ecstasy induced upon them by the truth, upon those heights at which Faith enlightens and Hope elevates them, far from lingering behind, because they have not yet obtained the full light which will satisfy their intelligence, they feel the necessity of transporting their vivid curiosity, and their stimulated investigations, into depths which would even astonish Rationalism itself!

Divine Providence, having given us the gift of reason to serve us as a guide, has no desire to exclude her absolutely from all matters of religion, nor in any way to destroy her. He wishes her, it is true, to submit to His great and sublime truths, but not prevent her free exercise, nor to reject her. Otherwise we would have only a vacillating, uncertain faith; a faith without consistency, forced, and devoid

of any merit whatsoever. You may, perhaps, tell me that these powerful and convincing motives which impel us to believe do not produce upon the irreligious the same impressions; and do you know the reason? Because they do not take the smallest trouble to think upon them; because they do not meditate upon these truths, nor do they examine them or study them in order to understand them well; because they are deficient in that firm, pure faith, and do not possess a heart sufficiently free and disengaged to be able to judge unbiased and free from the dark passions which preoccupy the intelligence, and which produce the moral death of humanity.

Daily do we see rising up around us, and even in the heart itself of Catholicism, perverse societies of unprincipled men, who, by means of their impieties, profane the holiest things, and bring down discredit upon the excellent service which we should give to the King of Heaven and of Earth; who attack God Himself, and would wish to erase from the minds of men the magnificent idea which has been impressed with indelible characters of so high a Lord; who doubt even of His Essence, and who strive, although vainly, to assure and make it appear that He is an imaginary Deity. Men who despise His Commandments and His Worship, and who hold as superstitious the homage which is due to Him; who endeavour, with untold zeal, to draw away from His Sacred Altars His most faithful servants, scoffing at their pious practices, and cast-

ing before them the calumnious, bold accusations of hypocrisy or simplicity.

Allow me to ask you, in view of all this: Is it possible that the refulgent torch of Faith illumines the weak intelligences of such ignoble and perverse men, when we find them thus buried in the pride of the world? No, indeed. For we have only to appeal to the true teaching of history, and we shall all acknowledge that individuals, as in the case of sensual nations, reject all Divine thought.

The great advantage, the extraordinary merit of our holy Faith consists in being sufficiently mysterious in the bases of its excellent sublime truths to demand the most humble submission: behold the reason why the Son of God said to St. Thomas, "*Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed*".[1]

Blessed is the man who believes and does not see, because were he to see he would not believe, since to believe is to conform with what is not seen; blessed is he who believes and does not see, because were he to see his conformity would not be a virtue, nor a subject of reward, because it would not depend upon his will nor upon his consent.

We are filled with true joy and great admiration, when we consider the infinite mercy and the supreme wisdom of our Lord and God in wishing to save us by the sweet and harmonious voice of the Christian faith. It has encompassed all—His glory and our sanctification! I pray and beseech Him that His

[1] "Beati qui non viderunt et crediderunt" (John xx. 29).

Divine Will may be pleased to allow our Faith to honour His adorable and sovereign Truths, and as in love we sacrifice our hearts, so, also, we would sacrifice, in like manner, our intelligences, by means of that same faith, and that He may bestow on us heaven as a recompense!

Because, what are the truths proposed to us for our belief, and what are its mysteries? Mysteries which are very far above our intelligence, and in which Reason, however penetrative it may be, must dash itself against the stony bulwarks which mark its just limits, beyond which nought is found but a dark, deep chaos! And what credence should we give to those mysteries so inaccessible to human reason? A belief so firm and so absolute, that through it we reject our senses, imposing silence upon our reason, and subjecting her completely to its sweet yoke; a belief so pure, that we cannot listen to the smallest difficulty, nor form the smallest doubt; a belief so full, and complete, and perfect, that it should extend to all the Articles of Faith which we possess; a belief, in conclusion, so resolute and so superior, from which nothing can absolutely separate us, "*neither tribulation, nor distress, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor danger, nor persecution, nor the sword; neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers*".[1]

This is the great and profitable teaching which our Divine Religion has traced for us in order to save our

[1] Paul to Rom. viii. 35 and 38.

weak and limited reason from leading us astray. Yet, presumptuous and reckless intelligences, through their own weakness and inexperience, reject, with haughty contempt, these extraordinary and sublime truths which always constituted, and will ever constitute, their strength and comfort. "We cannot admit them!" they say. "What, then, will you believe?" we demand. "Absolutely nothing," they insultingly reply. And, shutting their eyes to the true light, they calmly sleep away into a slumber of universal Scepticism.

Let us bend down to listen to all that is said around us, and read all that is printed on all sides, and say whether this be not a picture of the general state of society? This fearful state will continue to increase day by day unless the Catholic Religion raises up in the midst of this unwholesome society the Standard of the Cross, and bathes these proud, enervated intelligences in the Precious Blood of the Divine Lamb, the Sweetest Jesus, Who has regenerated the world in order that we should be made worthy of His merits, and thus attain to enjoy Eternal Glory in the Mansions of the Blessed.

SIXTH ARTICLE.

SIXTH ARTICLE.

LETTERS.

History—Its definition and division—Its essential conditions—The influence which Catholicism exercises upon it.

"*Belles-lettres*" comprehends, in general, history, eloquence and poetry. Let us commence with history, because it may truly be said to be the foundation of literature, in which our Divine Religion also powerfully influences.

General history *is the true relation of all past events during the course of the ages, their causes and results, for the instruction, reformation and recreation of man.*

Universal history is the methodical narration of the deeds of men. We can also say that *universal history* is the one which embraces in its fold every part of the world, and, omitting minor successes, recounts the most important ones. *National history*, as its name implies, is the narrative of events which have taken place in a nation. In conclusion *biographical history* is that which has for its object to relate the life of a man who has powerfully influenced his age, and rendered himself notable through his deeds. History is likewise divided into Sacred, Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern, which divisions may be said to be comprehended in the above category.

The Sacred Scriptures strictly embrace the whole of universal history, because in both should concur precisely three conditions, which are essential to them, *viz.*, unity of *origin*, unity of *object*, and unity of *direction*. Who will be daring enough to deny that there is unity of origin in God, from Whom all proceeds; and in our first parents, whom God created in the beginning of time? Who can deny that there is unity of object in God, the Universal Centre towards which all things tend, principally all the intelligences that have been created by Him? All things were created by God, because nothing existed before Him. It is, therefore, evident that every existence has been determined by God, and that the whole Creation, with its innumerable planets and worlds, is none other than the magnificent aureole of this Being, Absolute, Supreme, Infinite, Most Perfect. No one can deny the clear and conclusive unity of direction in God, before Whom all men are alike, Who watches over all creatures from the greatest and noblest down to the smallest, meanest insect that creeps upon the earth. Never will man be able to destroy this unity of direction in God, however much he may strive to do so, because He alone dominates with His Omnipotence the whole world, and encompasses with His immense gaze the vast, sweeping torrent of the Ages, which, having had their commencement and origin in eternity, will also have their end in that same eternity.

The Sacred Monuments of Catholicism contain

the primitive history of man and of the universe; the history of the Jewish people, their laws, their prophecies and miracles, whose deposit had been entrusted to them; the life of Jesus Christ, His teaching, His holy and sublime doctrines, collected together by the holy Apostles; and, lastly, the prophetic history of the society which He Himself had established upon an indestructible foundation. Of these two magnificent parts, called the *Old* and the *New* Testament, are composed the Sacred Scriptures, a marvellous Divine Book, whose beginning and end is our Lord and God.

In these Holy Books is found precisely this triple unity of *origin*, *object* and *direction*, which has been accorded to it by our Divine Religion, or rather, it is our very Religion, because it is the inexhaustible fountain of all the truths contained in them. The historian who rejects this triple unity rejects also the unity of God, the true religion, abundant wellspring of all truths, and, as a consequence, daringly despises the origin of humanity, the equality of individuals before Divine Providence, and, according to the expression of Fénelon, "they despise God, the Universe, the Fatherland, and the family". The order which the historian should follow is engraved in sacred characters upon our precepts. It is the order which God always enjoins, which Catholicism promulgates and constantly inculcates, and which the intelligence of man, with true enthusiasm, admires.

History in general, is, therefore, the public rela-

tion, the exact narrative of events which have been previously realised; it is the great book of the human life, in which are inscribed upon earth the most noteworthy events of men, and in accordance with which they will be justified or condemned; it is the impartial and exact judgment formed of the past for the profitable instruction of present and future times. How terrible! how powerful is the Tribunal of History! Never does it employ its indulgence but in regard to him who has lived in the most complete ignorance. This grand and severe tribunal reveals the deeds which might be supposed for ever buried in the deepest obscurity.

The historian who undertakes to edit, on his own responsibility, these judgments passed by a whole generation, and often by many successive generations, must never lose sight of the importance, the sublimity of his functions, ever keeping before him those immutable principles by which the life of the nations, as well as the lives of individuals, are judged, without ever desisting from meditating upon them, deeply investigating, as much as possible, their aims, in order to be able to form from them the solid foundation upon which his irrevocable decisions should rest.

Historians! It is not alone individuals that you summon to the severe tribunal of Public Opinion, it is also the nations, nay, the whole world itself. It is not only upon the life, which rapidly flies away and disappears like the smoke under the least breath of air, that you must pass your judgments, it is also

to the continued memory of this life, which is prolonged without end.

Holy Religion continually teaches us that historians should never lose sight of the sacred teaching of her holy laws, and that upon them they should form the indestructible basis of their conclusions. Because, how are they to have a fixed rule for judging human actions if they rudely wrench from these their reality? Where will you find the basis of political truths if you remove from these holy laws the moral truth? Oh! what dismal consequences would result from this, as then there would be no reason for preferring order to the most complete anarchy, or truth to error, or the Divine Light to the most appalling darkness.

It is important and necessary that the historian should reject this mood of fatalism, which completely destroys the beautiful life of man, and, as a consequence, destroys the morality of human actions. To endeavour in our days to raise the formidable statue of the blind and sanguinary deity of the Juggernaut of India would be not only to retrocede too far back into barbarism, but it would be the greatest of absurdities.

If man were deprived of free will, then there would be for him no possible distinction between vice and virtue; the just or unjust man would, in that case, be equally saved or condemned, a thing which could not be more illogical or more criminal. Nevertheless, man remains ever under the high and wise direction of the Omnipotent. He acts within the circle, more

or less extended, which is traced around him, but when he reaches the limit beyond which God has forbidden him to pass, he feels himself held back by a superior power, against which he in vain would try to wrestle. Nor can it be otherwise; because, who would be so bereft of sense as to believe he could wrest from the Supreme Creator the dominion which He has over creatures, which He Himself has created by the efficacy of His mere Word? Who among His creatures, weak and impotent, would dare attempt to scale the Heavens and upset the sublime plans of the All-powerful?

The historian, therefore, should ever keep before his mind these great principles, these excellent maxims of true humility, ever manifesting to the eyes of his readers the Divine Providence, always solicitous, always full of care for us, always attentive to all that happens upon earth. Oh! what a great consolation to the weak is the thought that were the earth to be subverted or shaken, it would not be long ere it would become poised again firmly on its foundations, whatever events might agitate the world. "Man becomes agitated, but God guides him," said the great and wise Fénelon. When the people of God found themselves in Egypt a prey to the greatest miseries under the powerful yoke of a cruel slavery, and weighed down by almost insupportable trials, they fled with Moses to the desert near Phihahiroth. The hardened heart of Pharaoh pursued and persecuted them, sending against them a formidable army. On its approach the children of Israel lifted up their

eyes, and on beholding the Egyptians were filled with terror. In front of them lay the sea, behind them stood a large army of warriors, and to the right and to the left were inaccessible mountains. In this fearful stress and dismal situation the children of Israel called upon Jehovah, and said to Moses: "*Perhaps there were no graves in Egypt, therefore thou hast brought us to die in the wilderness*".[1] Then Moses, in energetic tones, said: "*Fear not, stand and see the great wonders of the Lord, which He will do this day; for the Egyptians, whom you see now, you shall see no more for ever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace*".[2] He then immediately stretched forth his hand over the sea. The waters miraculously stood still on the right and on the left, like two stony walls. And the children of Israel walked as on dry land. Pharaoh and his army followed to continue their persecution; but the sublime and mysterious breath of the Omnipotent was felt, and the whole army was buried in the depths of the sea. Who is there that on reading this brief summary of the world's history will fail to perceive the Divine Finger of Providence? And who can doubt for a single moment that to the historian belongs the duty of drawing attention to the finger of God, which, although it does not always appear to us in an ostensible manner, yet never forsakes us? What a tender

[1] "Forsitan non erant sepulcra in Egypto, ideo tulisti nos" (Exod. xiv. 11).

[2] "Nolite timere: state et videte. . . . Dominus pugnabit pro vobis, et vos tacebitis" (Exod. xiv. 13 and 14).

consideration this is for filling with holy joy the hearts of the sad and of the unfortunate! What a wholesome warning this is, also, to the great ones of the earth, those who, despising charity, and forgetting their own littleness and misery, forget also "*that they are dust, and into dust shall return*"!

In conclusion, the historian ought to recount events with the most conscientious faithfulness. On no account is he permitted to invent, but, like a true and faithful witness, he must write all the events, such as they are in reality, the certain as certain, and the doubtful as doubtful. When he is called upon to judge events of any importance, he must not depend solely on his own judgment, but on the common opinion, which he should interpret faithfully, as far as possible, so as not to fall into those grave errors into which many have fallen, because they had the temerity to be guided solely by their own judgment.

Let it not be supposed for an instant by this that we wish to place the historian in the position of an itinerary scribbler. On the historian devolves the duty of imparting to his words the most beautiful forms when expressing his well-grounded ideas. To him belongs the forming of the picture in which all the events have been gathered together. To him appertains the style, the rich variety of colours, which are more impressive than the events themselves. Who is not impressed by the utterances of the historian, the cries which so often escape from his impassioned soul? Lastly, to him, in a word,

must he look for the profound reflections which he should make upon events, their great and noble ideas, which should be given with that complete conviction that passes from his own intelligence into that of his readers in such a way that they do not become involved in the dismal confusion which doubt naturally produces, by reason of the want of verification in the narrative of events which are not founded on competent authorities.

The historian who rejects these great maxims and the immutable principles which our Divine Religion prescribes to him does not comply with his high mission. It is impossible for him to fulfil the object of writing history, which is no other than to moralise or instruct, as he can never moralise doubt, and still less error, into which such writers fall when they are deficient in that fixed and absolute rule which is not to be found but in the bosom of the Holy Catholic Church.

To instruct is not to abase the intelligence into the depths of contradictions; it is to teach how to compare true events, certain and legitimate principles, to deduce consequences which are also certain and legitimate; it is to teach how to distinguish good from evil, and never to confound truth with error. "And how is he to assert," says an eminent writer,[1] "upon the intelligence an absolute judgment of things and of men, if he follows only a vague rule, ill-defined and subject to all the debates of opinions,

[1] *L'Auteur des Grandeurs du Catholicisme.*

which authors modify according to circumstances? It is not permitted to the fatalistic school, nor to the moralistic, to appreciate the past and the present; it is only permitted to them to estimate them when they attain to dominate them, that is to say, when instead of a criticism which can only be relative or arbitrary is affirmed a criticism immutable and absolute—the religious criticism."

From the great truths is logically deduced the powerful influence which Catholicism exercises upon the only way in which history should be written.

SEVENTH ARTICLE.

SEVENTH ARTICLE.

ELOQUENCE.

Its definition—Its history—The influence which is brought to bear upon Eloquence by Catholicism—Eloquence of the Sacred Scriptures.

ELOQUENCE is the art of speaking in such a manner as to attain the ends for which the words are spoken; that is to say, to teach, to move, to persuade and to convince. The history of eloquence dates back to the first ages of the creation of the world. God Himself taught it to our first parents, and it was continued by Moses and the Prophets. The Apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ raised eloquence to its highest pitch, shining like luminaries in the Greek and Latin Churches, which were so greatly enhanced by St. John Chrysostom, St. Justin, the two Gregories, St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Ambrose. What sublime ideas, what excellent and persuasive eloquence do we perceive in the magnificent discourses of these great Christian Apologists! In the Middle Ages, notwithstanding the fact that they were enveloped in the fearful shades of darkness and barbarism, eloquence was cultivated with singular fruit by the renowned St. Bernard, Albertus Magnus,

St. Thomas of Aquinas, and St. Bonaventure, who filled those memorable times with splendour.

In modern times our Mother the Church has not desisted for a single instant to consecrate her most enlightened sons to the profitable study of eloquence, while their writings are the admiration of the whole civilised world. Who is not astonished at the beauty of the *Funeral Orations* of the illustrious Bossuet? Who does not feel enraptured when reading the *Dialogues on Eloquence* by the immortal Fénelon? Who is not charmed with the Lenten discourses of the celebrated Massillon? Who can read, without being filled with enthusiasm, the eloquent writings of Cardinal Maury, the excellent works of Bourdaloue, and the *Ecclesiastical Rhetoric* of Fray Luis de Granada? How can we resist calling up the names of St. John of the Cross, of Cervantes, Maldonado, Sepulveda, Luis Vives, Cano, Victoria, and many others, who have bequeathed to us eminent works?

"From this beautiful alliance of letters with Faith springs freely a clear stream of happy inspirations. Who would be able to enumerate or enhance them? The name alone of Calderon would suffice to induce us to admire that gentle union, that unutterable marvel of the spirit of piety invigorating the flights of genius. The heavens of the Lord, with their mystical revelations; the two hemispheres, with their prodigies of nature; the sea, with uprising waves lashed by the wrath of the Highest, or with its tranquil waters like mirrors, reflecting the passing

of the luminary of night; the elevation of the mountain, upon the top of which God was wont to speak with His Prophets, and the depths of the valleys through which softly murmurs the breeze; the whirlwind of the world, with its many changes, and the silence and retirement of the forests, which invite to prayer; is there a single conception, or the smallest tint in that varied forest of the Muses, which has not been interpreted a thousand times over by our poets and our orators in defending the religious idea of the severe code of Christianity?"[1]

Never has Catholicism been a clog to genius, and never has she opposed herself to the progress of the civilisation of the world, as has been unjustly asserted by ignorant Protestants.

Against this unjust accusation rise up in contradiction the wise aims of her mission, the great impulse which she has given to the progress of the Sciences and the ardent love which she has always professed for letters. Remember the letter of the Sovereign Pontiff Leo X. to a Protestant Prince in which he says: "I have always loved good learned erudition; this love was born with me, and age has only strengthened it, because I always remarked that those who cultivate letters are heartfelt lovers of the dogmas of faith, and that they are the ornaments and the glory of the Catholic Church".[2]

[1] Arboli, *Oraison Funèbre on Miguel de Cervantes*, and other Spanish men of genius.

[2] Leo X., Letter to Henry VIII.

How much has our Sacred Religion suffered in regard to the civilisation of the world!

St. Gregory Nazianzen, in opposition to the Apostate Julian, exclaims in deeply sorrowful tones: "Who could have put into your mind the thought of forbidding to us the use of the Sciences? There is nothing I hold dearer, after the interests of heaven and the hope of Eternity, than the Sciences, and it is but just that I should take their side and defend them with all the vigour of my word and the fire of my heart."[1]

No one can possibly doubt the strength, the great power, the extraordinary dominion which speech wields. Who can doubt that to its influence is due the formation of great empires? To what else did Greece owe its extension and its authority but to the influence of the word? It was not by the thought but by the word that God created the world. "*For He spoke and they were made.*"[2] It is by the word that man, formed to the image and likeness of God, exercises over creation a sovereign authority, dominating and directing the animal world, and governing his fellow-beings. Good orators, such as Demosthenes, St. Bernard, Fénelon, Massillon, and others, were able to lead the most indocile people with as much ease as a skilled horseman leads a fiery steed. He speaks to the animal with all precaution; he caresses it at the same time that he places a wholesome curb and bridle upon it. After this he bids the

[1] St. Gregory Nazianzen, Discourse 4 against Julian.

[2] "Dixit, et facta sunt" (Ps. xxxii. 9).

animal stop, and the horse remains motionless. "Advance," he cries, and at the word of command the noble creature gallops away, braving the greatest dangers.

Eloquence possesses a prodigious virtue, nay, almost a Divine one. It is undoubtedly the greatest talent which God has granted to man. Theology, philosophy, history, poetry—all, all is found in eloquence! It might truly be said that it is the whole of man, for it exacts the simultaneous exercise of all his faculties. Let us watch a brilliant orator captivating the multitude around him. His imagination, vividly excited, imparts to his thoughts the most beautiful forms, the most seductive colouring. His words, slow and circumspect at commencing his discourse, are similar to the rill, which, escaping from the spring with a soft murmur, becomes strengthened by degrees, and, little by little, assumes power until it acquires a complete fulness and manifests itself in all its strength. At one time his words flow like a majestic river, which calmly carries its beneficent waters through fertile lands; at another, like a torrent which leaps onwards and carries everything before it in its tumultuous career.

The audience, captivated, yields to the smallest impulsion of the orator's dominating word. For a time there reigns a deep silence, and the people seem to hold their breath. Suddenly, from one extremity of the auditory rises a gentle murmur of approbation, which is very soon communicated to the opposite extremity of the crowd, like an electric shock. The

orator himself suffers at the same time as he imparts his telling speech and moves his audience.

It is not alone his eloquent word which serves to express his sublime, grand thoughts; his posture, his movements, his looks, his flashing eyes, his flushed face—all in him proclaims the conviction of his heart, and contributes to establish it in the minds and breasts of his hearers, who, enraptured, listen to him, deeply moved, and even shed abundant tears.

No one doubts that all these effects may be produced by the general orator, but what we have described applies more particularly to the sacred orator. As we have stated, is it not to Catholicism that eloquence owes her greatest marvels and most astounding effects? How abundant, how useful, how numerous, how important are the riches which our Divine Religion lavishes on the orator!

Those great mysteries, the firm belief in which is of such importance to our souls, those moral truths which the sacred orator unfolds, do they not claim for him an incontestable superiority over the secular orator? The latter, at times, must no doubt treat with subjects of immense interest to mankind; but, generally speaking, he defends at best minor interests, which apply to certain times and places, while the Catholic orator belongs to all, and every place and time, because the interests he advances, and the truths he announces, concern the whole of humanity.

How can the Protestant orator stand in the same category as the Catholic one after so daringly rejecting the most Sacred Dogmas? And what Dogmas

have Protestants rejected? They have rejected the Dogma of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist, that inexhaustible fountain of most vivid emotions, that great mystery which is renewed every day, and which, from the heights of the heavens, is enacted and brings down the Just One upon earth to renew, in an unbloody manner, the great Sacrifice of the Cross. They reject the most excellent gift which has been given to men by the Saviour of the World.

What beautiful scenes, what magnificent pictures are presented to the sacred orator by the noble daughter of Nazareth! Whether we contemplate this purest Virgin, enriched by all the virtues, whom the world salutes as being the comfort and the refuge of all who have recourse to her in full confidence. Or whether we are filled with admiration on beholding her in the Stable, adoring her Divine Infant, together with the humble shepherds and the wise men. Or whether we consider her as civilising the world and interesting herself in all the works whose fulfilment concerns the Christian world; or assisting in the Incarnation of the Word for the redemption of the human race, and in the foundation of the Holy Church; or associating herself in the social regeneration of the Nations. Or whether we think of her as listening with kind ear to the prayer of the pilot, terror-stricken at the tempest which threatens to destroy his frail barque, and calming with her sweet smile the fury of the angry waves. Or whether we enthusiastically admire her as she stands on Calvary,

praying at the foot of the Cross, or consider her, later on, as being carried by the Angels to the highest heavens, whence she casts looks of mercy upon her dearly-loved children! "Ah! holiest Virgin!" I will ever exclaim with the Evangelist, "may you be a thousand times *blessed among women, hail! full of grace, for the Lord is with thee.*"[1] "*Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all*";[2] because you are the ever-flowing fountain of the richest treasures of goodness, of beauty, and of mercy, and your image alone is a most eloquent teaching, and a perennial well-spring of ineffable consolations and endless joy!

What beautiful deeds do we not also find in the lives of the Saints as themes for the sacred orator? Those glorious martyrs, whose courage is incomparable, and those hermits, exhaling in arid deserts the rich fragrance of virtues, and those timid virgins, gifted with all the charms of innocence and sanctity, who have been elevated to the very heavens, carried on the powerful wings of Divine Love! No Protestant orator can speak to his misguided brethren concerning "*that Church which suffers*". He cannot, as does the Catholic orator, excite the commiseration of the living on behalf of the dead, for the relief of souls which are passing through a great, yet temporary punishment; that, by their prayers and tears, the Divine Justice may be moved to convert their torments and sighs into the sweet songs of Eternal Joys!

[1] Luke i. 28. [2] Prov. xxxi. 29.

If Protestants have severed the unity which gathers together all human intelligences, making them to converge towards a common centre with the celestial intelligences, giving us the most beautiful idea we can form of the magnificent harmony of creation; if all their *mutilated dogmas* rest on the fragile basis of their own dismal reason, can they teach as though possessing authority like Jesus Christ? By no means. They discuss, it is true; but placing themselves in contradiction to their principles, and even to their consciences, they cast aside from the Church her imposing authority, and communicate to the unwary the uncertain results of all their discussions. Their false teaching cannot be compared with the true, majestic and Divine teaching of Catholicism; that teaching, which, coming down from the highest heavens upon the heart of man, produces in it the most profound, the most consoling, the sweetest sentiments. The chair of Protestantism, resting as it does on the ruinous foundations of pride, can only be occupied and filled by the proud man. The Catholic Religion has raised eloquence, not only in the Tribune, but to the throne, and this throne is the Christian "*Cathedra*" to which God has given for foundations faith and humility. In it is found the Catholic priest suspended, as it were, between heaven and earth, to hear the Divine Word, and, on receiving It, he repeats It to his people. In that sacred spot we behold not the man; there we see only the minister of the Gospel, because the words he pronounces are not, in truth, his own, but they

are those of Jesus Christ, who sent him: "*Verba mea non sunt mea, sed ejus, qui misit me*". What he teaches in the holy and majestic Temple, where all things contribute to exalt his imagination, and which affords living and magnificent colouring to move his audience, is taught, at the same time, throughout all the nations, and in every place on the globe; what he repeats to-day has been spoken in all ages. With the Evangelists and the Apostles, he teaches the Divine *morale* of our adorable Saviour; with the Prophets, he announces the happy or the sad future of the people, according as these love or despise their supreme Creator; with the Patriarchs, he teaches man that this life, so short and miserable, is a most bitter pilgrimage, one which can only be sweetened by the hope of an eternal life.

. . . . . .

It is undeniable that in the sacred writings the orator finds an immeasurable and most abundant fountain of the purest eloquence. Do you desire to speak to the human intelligence? Do you seek to adorn your eloquent discourses with deep, sublime, magnificent thoughts which shall amaze your audience? Deeply study the Sacred Scriptures, and you will not pass a single page without adding many elevated thoughts, energetic, sublime, because there is not a single page in which is not found a great object to move, to impress, and to marvel over, presented by God Himself. There is no single treatise on literature in which the beauty of the following words are not admired: "*And God said: 'Be light*

made'. And light was made."[1] "*He who is. The Heavens are His throne, and the earth is as a footstool for His Feet. The earth is struck dumb in His Presence.*" What admirable, what grand and deep thoughts will you find also in those wholesome precepts wherein are inculcated the beautiful and noble virtue of Charity!

It is in the Holy Bible that are found inscribed those Divine dramas, whose aims spring from the Heavens, and which find an echo in, and reanimate and profoundly move, our hearts. Who can read without emotion the admirable history of Joseph, son of Jacob? It is with difficulty that tears can be restrained when, meditating on this tender passage of the Bible, we seem to see him wiping his own tears; and, above all, when we seem to hear him exclaim: "*I am Joseph; is my father living? I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.*"[2] This most beautiful passage of the Scriptures used to make Voltaire himself weep from admiration; he who, although he did not read the Bible with the eyes of Catholic Faith, nevertheless thus expresses himself: "I confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures truly astonishes me, the holiness of the Gospels speak to my heart. Behold the books of the Philosophers with all their pomp; how small they appear by their side!"

The wailings and cries of the Prophet, he who seemed to have equalled the Lamentations with the

[1] Gen. i. 3. [2] Gen. xlv. 3 and 4.

bitterness of the calamities themselves, do they not find an echo in every heart? When we read of the Queen of Nations, in former times so populous, and now converted into an arid waste; when in spirit we hear the Priests and the Virgins wailing day and night, the tender little ones weepingly asking for bread and unable to procure any, we at once cry out with Jeremias: "*Who will give water to my head, and a Fountain of tears to my eyes? And I will weep night and day* for the misfortunes of Jerusalem."[1] In truth we shall find in the Sacred Scriptures all that can move our hearts to noble and tender emotions. In this most beautiful book is found smouldering that holy and Divine fire which our Redeemer brought on earth, with which to unite closely all men to Himself; in it we enthusiastically admire the most tender sentiments, the most consoling and also the most encouraging, which the human heart can experience.

Orators! if at any time you have to address those who are labouring under the weight of the hatred and the ill-will of men, let them hear the beautiful and magnificent language of the Holy Scriptures: "*Blessed are ye, when they shall revile you and speak all that is evil against you. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven.*"[2] Who has not read with deepest emotion the parable of the Prodigal Son, forgetting in the fatherly arms his wanderings and his dissolute life?

The language, the beauty of expression which we

[1] Jer. ix. 1. [2] Matt. v. 11-2.

observe in the Holy Bible causes in us an enthusiastic admiration. How concise the narrative, what precision, what vividness, what majesty do we find in the books of the Pentateuch! What power, what energy so incomparable, what sublime aspirations in the magnificent book of the Psalms! Who is there that does not admire the beauty and the enchanting simplicity of the Gospel, as well as the imposing grandeur of the Epistles? Who is not astonished, moved, and charmed by the interesting narrative of the Apocalypse?

In conclusion, we affirm that if the Fathers of the Church possessed a grand style, enrapturing and majestic, it is because they dedicated themselves to the study of the Scriptures and became imbued with their magnificent language.

The splendour which we so much admire in the beautiful style of these writers, is oftentimes a reflection of the Sacred Scriptures. The same effect is observable in all our most noted masters of literature; it is to the Sacred Scriptures that they are indebted for their style, which is no less elevated than their thoughts. "Suppress the Bible along with imagination," said an illustrious member of the *Real Académia* of Spain, "and you will have suppressed what is beautiful in the great literature of Spain, or you will, at least, despoil it of its most sublime flights, of its most splendid adornments, of its noble pomp and its holy magnificence."[1]

[1] Valdegamas, Discourse pronounced on his reception into the *Real Académia* of Spain.

What we have said of the orator may also be well applied to the writer, because our Holy Religion also powerfully influences written eloquence. Let us read our great Apologists, both ancient and modern—all those who have dedicated themselves to the study of *belles-lettres* under the shelter of Catholicism—and what precision, what grandeur, what sublimity do we not find in their ideas? What force of expression, what eloquence in their words which convey their thoughts to the extreme ends of the globe, and are preserved for ages! And when these eminent writers treat upon a subject of universal interest, how they fill the world with enthusiasm and admiration.

They also instruct, individually, at times, if I may so express myself. They speak to the heart as a good friend speaks to his friend. Of this kind are the *Spiritual Letters* of the memorable Fénelon. How charming are these letters, and how captivating is their sweet and amiable simplicity! Yet, in this class of eloquence there is nothing to equal the beautiful book of the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*. What a divine, enrapturing book! What an inexplicable union do we find in it! Let incredulity show us whether, outside Catholicism, there is any composition, I do not say that can be compared to it, but that has any similarity with it. It is impossible to read a page without feeling emotion. I will state a reflection which many have made upon it. "How is it that in the Middle Ages, when the intelligence was so uncultured, and the heart completely delivered up to the grossest passions, there should have existed

a *Solitary* who should have found that measure of expression, that perfect knowledge of man, which, in our days, astonishes even the most enlightened masters of the spiritual life? Who had instructed him so wonderfully in the mysteries of eloquence and of the heart?"

To this reflection and question we will reply with joy and enthusiasm, "Our holy Catholic Faith. Yes! that lively Faith, ardent and Divine, which has saved and so highly illustrated the World."[1] Yes! we say it with the deepest conviction, this grand and magnificent book is the clearest, the most conclusive, and the most convincing testimony to the Divinity of our Sacred Religion, and of the powerful influence which this Divine Teacher exercises over eloquence.

[1] Hæc est victoria, quæ vincit mundum, fides nostra" (Epist. B. Joannis, v. 4).

EIGHTH ARTICLE.

EIGHTH ARTICLE.

Influence of Catholicism on Poetry—Biblical Poetry is superior to the Pagan.[1]

I KNOW not upon what foundation unbelievers base their assertions when they vainly attempt to maintain that Catholicity is hostile to poetry. What an error! Let them lay aside the Christian Religion, and they will at once clip the wings of the genius of the poet, and it will most undoubtedly fall to the ground, enveloped in the woeful abomination of this world, so full of abjection and of misery.

But, on the contrary, when, having faith for a guide, the horizon of poetry becomes clear, and its limits extended before the gaze of the poet in the immensity of God, faith becomes united to charity, which is pure love, which sustains and elevates the heart of man to the celestial regions. No one can possibly deny this incontestable truth; yet there are some who, dragged by the violent, sweeping currents of their own reason, dare to maintain that Pagan mythology is more favourable to poetry than our

[1] In the arrangement of this article, and those that may follow, I shall make use of a work entitled *Le Génie du Catholicisme*, from which I have derived many of the chief proofs, although in a different form.

Holy Religion. Those who think in this absurd manner are miserably mistaken.

How much more full and complete is Religion, since we find in it more truth in its mysteries, in its morals, and in its cultus! Is it, therefore, less favourable to poetic genius than to any other talent? God Almighty never gives error as food for genius. To say the contrary would be to blaspheme; it would be to ridicule and highly offend the Divinity. Falsehood is never advantageous, whilst truth in every way possesses a secret virtue, which nothing can replace for its want, because truth proceeds from God Himself.

It has been said with much truth that never has the description been adequately made of the dwellings of the Blessed. The great Apostle has afforded us the principal reason of this omission when he affirms that we are unable to conceive anything which can be compared to the rewards promised us in the Kingdom of Heaven. Nevertheless, if anything could afford us even so much as an imperfect idea of that magnificent and eternal mansion, so incomprehensible to our limited intelligences, it is undoubtedly our Catholic Faith.

Let us read what has been said to this effect by a believer, at the very time when the Divine Faith, which had been the first cause of his glory and of his power, had become weakened in his soul. It runs as follows:—

"I saw like an immovable Ocean, immense, infinite, and in this Ocean three oceans: an ocean of

Power, an ocean of Light, an ocean of Life ; and these three oceans, mingling together without becoming confounded, formed an Ocean itself, an equal, indivisible unity, absolute, eternal. And this Unity was *That* which *Is ;* and in the depths of this Being an ineffable knot united together Three Persons, which were named to me, and their names were the Father, the Son, and the Spirit ; and in this union there existed a mysterious generation, a mysterious breath, living, fecund ; and the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit were *That* which *Is*. And the Father appeared to me like a Power, which, within the Infinite Being, One with Him, was no more than one act, permanent, complete, illimitable, which is the same Infinite Being. And the Son appeared to me like a permanent Word, complete, limitless, that dictates what the power of the Father works, which is what is the Infinite Being. And the Spirit appeared to me like love, like effusion, like a mutual inspiration between the Father and the Son, animating them with a common life, animating them by a permanent life, complete, limitless, the Infinite Being. And these three Beings were One, and these Three were God, and embraced each other, and were united under the impenetrable Sanctuary of the substance *One ;* and this embrace, this union was realised in the bosom of the immensity of the Eternal Joy, of the eternal enjoyment of *That* which *Is*.

"And in the depths of this ocean of the Being there swam, and floated, and extended the Creation in the manner of an island, which incessantly seeks

to widen its shores in the midst of a limitless sea. It expanded like a flower which throws out its roots in the waters, and that shoots up its tall stems and opens its corolla on the surface. And I saw other beings chained one to another, and I could see them produce and unfold in their innumerable variety, feeding upon a sap which never becomes exhausted of power, and of light, and of life, of *That* which *Is*. And that which had been formerly hidden from me became manifested to my gaze, which now was not curtailed by the material cover of the essences. Unfettered from all earthly impediments, I proceeded from world to world, similarly to the spirit here below, which goes from thought to thought; and after having been inundated, lost in those marvels of power, and of wisdom, and of love, I sank and lost myself in that same origin of love, and of wisdom, and of power, and then I experienced all that is the Fatherland; and I was satiated with light, and my soul, ravished up by the waves of harmony, slumbered upon the celestial depths in an unspeakable ecstasy.

"After this I saw the Christ on the right of His Father resplendent with an immortal glory. And I saw Him also, like a mystical Lamb, Immolated upon an Altar. Ten thousand angels, and all the men ransomed by His Blood, surrounded the Lamb, and were singing His praises and returning Him thanks in the language of the Heavens. And one drop of the Blood of the Lamb fell upon nature, weakened and sick, and I saw it become transfigured, and all the creatures which it enclosed quickened with a

new life, and all lifted up their voice, and this voice said: "Holy! Holy! Holy is He who has destroyed evil and has conquered death!

"And the Son leaned on the bosom of the Father, and the Spirit covered them with His Shadow, and between them there was a Divine mystery, and the Heavens, in silence, became agitated."

Let us compare merely these last words with the following verses which have been so justly lauded: "*Annuit et totum nutu tremefecit Olympum*".[1] What a difference! We shall perchance find the same beauty of imagery and expression, but how are we to find the same loftiness and the same rectitude of thought?

Even this very verse "*Annuit*, etc.," which is one of the most select of Pagan poetry, how can one compare it with the "*Respicit terram, et facit eam tremere. Montes, sicut cera, fluxerunt a facie ejus. Tangit montes, et fumigant*" of the inspired David? How can we ever compare the praises which Virgil directs to Augustus with the magnificent canticle of the divine poet Moses, when he returns thanks to the God of Israel after he has passed through the Red Sea? Thus sings Moses: "*Fortitudo mea, et laus mea Dominus, et factus est mihi in salutem*". One only breath of the mouth of Jehovah sufficed to bury Pharaoh and his army in the sea, to destroy those who persecuted the people of God: "*Flavit spiritus tuus, et operuit eos mare: submersi sunt quasi plumbum in aquis vehementibus*".[2]

[1] "He assented and all Olympus trembled at his nod" (Virgil).
[2] Exod. xv. 10.

How compare the power of the God Jupiter, whom the poet Ovid presents to us casting rays upon the Titans, who scaled the heavens to make a ferocious warfare—"*Tum pater omnipotens misso perfregit Olympum Fulmine et excussit subjecto Pelion Ossae*"[1]—with the sublimity and the greatness of the God of David, Who laughs at His enemies—"*Qui habitat in cœlis irridebit eos: et Dominus subsannabit eos*"—and Who destroys not only the impious, but even the very place from which the proud had risen? "*Vidi impium superexaltatum, et elevatum sicut cedros Libani. Et transivi, et ecce non erat: et quæsivi eum, et non est inventus locus ejus.*"[2]

How can we place the God of Moses, of David, of the Prophets, and of the Apostles, Who is our God and Lord, in comparison with the senseless divinities of Paganism? How can we offer the incense of poetry to that crowd of sanguinary gods and false prophets, who only employ themselves in deceiving, and who excite to laughter even the very children? How can a poet draw inspiration from that irritating and scandalous affinity which is found between the heaven and the hell of the Pagans? Can they perchance possibly reconcile evil and good, vice with virtue, error and truth? Impossible! Therefore

[1] But these the Sire
Omnipotent, with lightning bolt through all
Olympus flashing, hurled adown, and dashed
Ossa from Pelion headlong.
Metamorphoses, Book i., 186 to 188.
Translated by Henry King, M.A., 1871.

[2] Ps. xxxvi. 35-6.

there can be no affinity between heaven and hell. The one was made by God to be the dwelling-place of angels, of the saints, and of the just. The other was formed by sin. A proud Archangel fell from the highest heavens down to the lowest depths of the infernal abyss because he rebelled against the Omnipotent, and with the rebound of his immeasurable fall the whole world shook, that world which its Divine Author had just created; that world which His only begotten Son hastened to poise firmly again, dying on a shameful cross to regenerate and save it!

The grandeur of the Supreme Lord of heaven and of earth can never be compared with the nothingness of that miserable Pagan divinity which, according to Lista, "was supposed to be divided among the Great Lords of Olympus, like sovereignty in the feudal code". The God of the Bible, the God of Catholicism embraces and dominates the entire universe, an only word sufficing to create it. "*Dixit, et facta sunt.*" "*Fiat lux, et facta est lux.*" The beautiful picture which the Divine poet David shows in Psalm ciii., when, contemplating nature, he directs to its Supreme Author blessings and praises, very loudly proclaims that never will it be possible to reconcile the artificial poetry of Paganism, bereft of ideas, with the grandeur, the magnificence and the sublimity of Biblical poetry. Thus sings the inspired David: "*Benedic anima mea Domino: Domine Deus meus magnificatus es vehementer. . . . Extendens cœlum sicut pellem: Qui tegis aquis superiora ejus. Qui ponis nubem ascensum tuum: qui ambulas super pennas ventorum. Qui facis Angelos tuos.*"

Truly is He not a magnificent God, He who calls upon the light to be His raiment. He who stretches the heavens, like one who unfolds a curtain; who poises the world upon most sure foundations; who measures the depths of the oceans, and commands them perpetually to move? Yes! all is sublime, and so much the more sublime because all is wise; it fills the understanding and exalts the imagination, because it is the lively light of Truth, which allows itself to be translated by Art, communicating to it eternal and undying resplendencies.

There is nothing comparable in force and energy to the following passage of the Bible, wherein the Holy Spirit, speaking in the language of men, places before us the Omnipotent in wrath against erring humanity:—

"*The earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the mountains were troubled and were moved, because He was angry with them.*

"*There went up a smoke in His wrath: and a fire flamed from His face: coals were kindled by it.*

"*He bowed the heavens, and came down: and darkness was under His feet.*

"*And He ascended upon the cherubim, and He flew; He flew upon the wings of the winds.*

"*And He made darkness His covert, His pavilion round about Him: dark waters in the clouds of the air.*

"*At the brightness that was before Him the clouds passed, hail and coals of fire.*

"*And the Lord thundered from heaven, and the Highest gave His voice: hail and coals of fire.*

"*And He sent forth His arrows, and He scattered them: He multiplied lightnings, and troubled them.*

"*Then the fountains of waters appeared, and the foundations of the world were discovered:*

"*At Thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the spirit of Thy wrath.*" [1]

If this passage is rich in grandeur, sublimity and magnificence, the following one is no less so in which David, addressing all men, vividly and energetically calls upon them to acknowledge and understand the true God:—

"*O clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of joy, For the Lord is high, terrible: a great King over all the earth. He hath subdued the people under us; and the nations under our feet.*" [2]

This powerful call to the true Light, this fervent voice which spontaneously springs from the pure, ardent heart of the divine poet, shines in all his grand and sublime compositions. Hence unbelievers are blind to truth who pretend to maintain that Pagan poetry is superior to Biblical poetry. This would be simply impossible, because the poets of Paganism drew their inspirations from a blind divinity, extravagant and absurd, whilst the poets of the sacred Bible found their inspiration in a most Wise God, Immense, Omnipotent, Infinite; their chaunts participating of eternity, their inflamed accents confided to the chords of their sacred lyres, are echoed throughout the whole universe, and

[1] Ps. xvii. 8-16. [2] Ps. xlvi.

therefore all the poets of Catholic nations imbibe, without ever being satiated, from those inexhaustible fountains into which the Most High has poured His infinite light, and are compositions which are universally and enthusiastically admired, and which even the non-Christian poets cannot help seeking, and drawing from. To what is the celebrated lyric writer Rousseau indebted for a great portion of his glory and renown, but to the magnificent psalms of David? Who can fail to read with delight those beautiful and majestic verses, although it is a poetry very inferior to the original, from whence Rousseau himself drew them?

> "*Les cieux instruisent la terre*
> *A rêvérer leur Auteur.*
> *Tout ce que leur globe enserre*
> *Célèbre un Dieu Créateur.*"

I would be too diffuse were I to treat here of all the great compositions of authors who have drawn their inspirations from the Sacred Scriptures. All those gigantic conceptions which we find in the "*Divina Commedia*," in the "*Paradise Lost*," in the "*Jerusalem Delivered*," in "*Paul and Virginia*," in "*Telemachus*," and in many others, from whence have they sprung, but from the rich and perennial springs of truth, of splendour, of beauty, and of magnificence that are enclosed in the Holy Bible!

With much truth does Donoso say that "the Bible is a book which we read every day, and every night, and it is a book which we never finish read-

ing". "If you suppress the Bible along with imagination," says another of our illustrious littérateurs, "tell me what remains of the great, and the spiritual, and the beautiful in the literature of the last twenty centuries?"

"Even in Philosophy, in the Arts, in languages, in all intellectual culture," says Schlegel, "the influence exercised by the Bible has been great in regard to all Christian nations." "How much greater should its influence be upon poetry, with its characters beautifully figured, and deeply symbolical," says Chateaubriand.

If we examine, one by one, the compositions of the Catholic poets, we shall observe that they have all been inspired by the Sacred Scriptures. And from this it follows that some are energetic and profound, desirous of imitating Moses when he depicts our God, the Creator, and the Omnipotent; others are grand, and yet, at the same time, humble, endeavouring to copy David when he admirably describes the magnificence and mercy of the Lord of heaven and of earth; others manifest themselves sad and wailing, in imitation of Job where he so vividly describes the touch of Divine Justice; others again are tragical and sublime, like Jeremias on beholding the fearful ruins of his beloved Jerusalem; while yet again others appear sentimental and sweet, like to Isaias when he announces the humiliations and the cruel torments which the Divine Redeemer was to endure at the hands of the human race.

All is grand, magnificent and sublime in the Sacred Scriptures, but the most extraordinary of its books, as regards thought and expression, is, undoubtedly, the Apocalypse, where we can imagine we actually *feel* that "*He cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth shall bewail themselves because of Him. Even so. Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.*"[1]

There is nothing to be compared to the grandeur of these versicles, not even the highly lauded verses which we read in the opening of the "*Avernus*" of Virgil: "*Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram*". . . .[2]

This passage, so beautiful and pathetic, has been perfectly reproduced by Dante, with his extraordinary genius, when penning the famous inscription which is read on the entrance door of his "*Inferno*," and which is couched in these beautiful verses:—

"*Per me si va nella citta' dolente,*
Per me si va nel 'eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
. . . . . .
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate."

All those who read both compositions will observe the same beauties in the Latin poet as in the Italian one. "In these three repeated *Per me si va*," says a learned writer,[3] "is supposed to be felt the icy

[1] Apocalypse i. [2] Æneid, book vi.
[3] Chateaubriand.

agonies of the Christian. The '*Lasciate ogni speranza*' is comparable to the finest outburst in the '*Avernus*' of Virgil."

But all these words, however strong and terrible their expression may be, how can they bear any comparison with those words which the Divine Judge will pronounce on the day of Judgment against the reprobates, words which will precipitate them into the very depths of hell: "*Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire*"?[1]

There can be no possible comparison between Pagan poets and the beautiful, sublime poetry of the Bible, in the same way as there can be no comparison between the intelligence of man and the Infinite Intelligence, nor between the shadow of truth and Truth Itself, which is God!

[1] Matt. xxv. 41.

NINTH ARTICLE.

NINTH ARTICLE.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

New sources of inspiration which Catholicism offers to the poet—Dangers which the poet is exposed to if left to himself.

THERE are many who, in truth, deceive themselves when they believe that Catholicism, enclosed in her own sanctuary, occupies herself solely with the salvation of souls, and that, outside this most important sphere, her actions are completely null. It is evident that Catholicism sanctifies souls, because this is her principal mission; but who can even so much as doubt that it effects this sanctification in a grand, powerful, energetic and sublime manner, which exalts all the faculties of man? Placed in the centre of the world, in order to raise up to God Himself the homage of men, she distributes celestial blessings with equity, manifesting to them the just rewards of eternal bliss, while at the same time she shows also the just punishment of evil by eternal misery. Oh, what a vast field this offers to the genius of the poet! What grand and sublime subjects are represented by our Divine Religion for his meditations!

It is indubitable that Purgatory, the place of purification, wherein souls are cleansed of every slight spot and stain, is a great means of inspiration offered by Catholicism to the genius of the poet. Who is not filled with enthusiasm when meditating upon this place of temporary expiation, that conception of a state which so perfectly reconciles Justice and Mercy, those two Divine attributes which appear so opposed to one another, yet which are only so in appearance? It is evident and satisfactory to reason that there should be this scale of suffering, in which souls can expiate their sins, in proportion to the guilt incurred, and in proportion to the place they occupy between the eternity of pain and the eternity of felicity. Our sighs, our tears, our prayers, all our good works rise from earth up to heaven as offerings and expiations for the suffering souls, that so they may become purified, and may then go radiantly, with the angels, up to the mansions of the Just!

Modern poets! are you not touched and impressed when you witness the tender solicitude, the holy fervent love which animates the good son as he weeps over the tomb of a beloved parent, that of a mother leaning over the grave of her loved child, of the friend over that of his friend? Bards of the earth! let your voices resound in praise of this Divine idea in all your sweet and melodious songs. Sing the sorrows of your brethren as you would do your own. Leave aside those profane songs that have served to stain the once resplendent

purity of those very souls which are now expiating a moment of guilty pleasure by a whole age of fearful torments. Cast over your harps the crape of mourning. Let your pious harmonies rise up to heaven on the holy wings of prayer in order to appease the Divine wrath, so justly irritated against us.

Nature offers another source and means of inspiration to the poet, if he views her in the light in which our Divine Religion represents her. O ye unbelieving poets! do you not see everywhere rising before your view this earth, so full of verdure, of freshness and of life, at the Voice of the Supreme Creator? The King of Nature, man, disobeys the absolute will of God, and all things become instantly changed. God, in just punishment of the disobedience of our first parents, cursed the earth, covering it with thorns and briers; the animals which He had created to embellish nature He scatters on all sides in terror and fright; He condemns man to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, in this valley of tears; the woman, that beautiful creation, He condemns to bring forth in labour—"*In dolore paries filios*"—those beings which are to continue this hapless existence. The earth is seen reddened with the blood of Abel on account of the cruel fratricide of his brother Cain. Then does Death commence to commit its horrible devastations. It is not the crimes of a few individuals which quickly stain the land; perversity becomes general, and demands a retributive justice, and the whole world perishes in the waters of the

deluge—Noah and his family alone are saved, on account of their virtue. The sons of Noah return to people the globe—alas! to fill it with crimes, with abjection, and with misery.

But now it is no longer Justice which proposes to regenerate the earth, it is Mercy. The heavens bow down in awe at the Divine *Word* taking flesh in the womb of a humble virgin. In an instant the world is filled with splendour and with sanctity, because the Son of God suffered, in order to ransom it, injuries, countless sorrows, and the most shameful death on the Cross. From the firmly planted foot of this sublime Cross His disciples go forth, entrusted with the work of continuing its highest mission. It is our Holy Church which unfolds and expands in a most admirable manner. As ancient as man, this Divine Mother must needs accompany him to the end of his pilgrimage upon earth. What prodigious effects does this excellent Teacher work on all sides! What notable and admirable personages does she summon up to appear on the stage of the world! The Patriarchs, who still preserve a shadow of that immortality which was to be the recompense of sinless man. Others are the Prophets, before whose eyes had been revealed the future. Again, the Martyrs, carrying with extraordinary intrepidity the palm of victory. They are our Knights without fear and without any manner of reproach.

How small do the heroes of Paganism appear to us in presence of our Christian heroes! Ajax trembled and fled from the presence of Hector, who

himself trembled and fled before Achilles; but the lowliest and least favoured of our Knights never trembled or fled in presence of the most terrible adversary, nor even in presence of death itself. Yes! We proclaim it loudly, the Catholic warrior is superior to all other warriors, because he has for a solid foundation the virtues of Christian faith.

There is no doubt that Pagan poets have done all that is possible, from a human point of view, when writing such beautiful things respecting their divinities; but all these things, however beautiful they may be, do they leave anything truly lovely and interesting in the depths of our hearts? What are the results left on the soul by all these grand beauties?

Ah! how much more highly favoured is the Catholic poet in his solitude, wherein he has God for his companion! His sylvan woods, freed from that dismal crowd of ridiculous gods, have become filled with an immense Divinity. The gift of prophecy and of wisdom, the mysteries of religion seem to reside in its sacred depths. We might say that the Catholic poet finds himself *alone* in the depths of the woods, but it is not so; because the intelligence of man, assisted by the Divine Light, easily fills the great spaces of nature, and one only thought of his soul is far more vast than all the solitudes of the earth.

It is evident that our Divine Religion offers a class of poetry far higher than that which is offered us by Paganism. A ship is tossing on the ocean, and in danger of being wrecked; the chaplain, by means of

words which purify souls, absolves each one of the beings on board from his faults; he directs to Heaven fervent prayer, which in the midst of the whirlwind of the storm rises like a spirit from the wreck to the God of the Tempest. The ocean heaves and divides its waters, ready to engulph the hapless mariners; the waves, rising up with melancholy wailing, dash among the rocks and seem to be chanting a funeral dirge. In an instant a ray of light gleams in the midst of the storm; the *Star of the Sea*, Mary, the Patroness of Mariners, appears in the centre of the dark cloud. In her arms she holds the Divine Child, and calms the fury of the waves with her smile. O enchanting religion! which opposes to all that nature holds most terrible what heaven has of sweetest—to the tempest on the ocean, a little Child and a tender Mother!

But our Divine Religion, not satisfied with simply offering the poet important subjects and rich materials, also assists him in the execution of his work. We have already said it, "the poet is the man of solitude, of interior recollection and of meditation". If the greater portion of the works of the present day are deficient of thought and are weak in expression, it is because their authors, perturbed in mind, and carried along by the whirl of business and of material joys, always work in great precipitation, in the manner of a dense cloud which does not allow us to pierce through the haze, and see more than a slight conceit which very quickly disappears altogether. The works of man, more particularly poetry,

demand a conscientious labour, meditation and solitude. Ye poets! ye who have chosen an arduous subject, do ye wish to succeed? Withdraw from the bustle of the world, at least for a time; go and meditate beneath the shades of a wood; go and pray in an ancient cathedral, at the foot of the Cross, and near the tombs; ask of those very sons of solitude the difficult practice of silence and of meditation. Do you seek to depict nature? Study beforehand to know her. Do you wish to speak of man? Enter into your own selves and convert your hearts. Do your aspirations tend towards God? Ever listen with attention and respect to what is taught us by our holy Catholic Faith.

Lastly, Religion is well calculated to prevent the most grave and multiplied wanderings of poetry. The first danger to which the poet is exposed is that very retirement in which he is obliged to live oftentimes. A solitary wanderer among paths of thought little known, once he takes a false direction he becomes separated, with extraordinary rapidity, from his object. At length the light disappears, night covers him with her darksome mantle, and finally precipitates him into the abyss.

A second danger to the poet is the elevation itself of his thoughts. To please the public he rises and takes a flight even to the Heavens. Do we not perceive an immense danger in this elevation of thought? The poet loses sight of the earth from which he has departed, and back to which he has to descend. He ignores the Hand which lifted him up, and he no

longer knows himself; he attempts to rise still higher, but in vain; his head becomes giddy, his thoughts wander, and if he does not quickly seek refuge in Religion, his complete ruin is certain.

Poetry is also dangerous on account of the beauty of its expression, and of the harmony of its language. Modern Poets! you think not that you wander away when walking through those paths covered with flowers; but bear in mind that those who follow you imbibe and participate in your illusion.

Had Voltaire recounted in a common, usual way the great infamies of that *Poem* which rendered him so guilty in presence of the Christian Religion, he would have filled the whole of France with indignation, he would undoubtedly have aroused in her that moral sense which is difficult to smother; but he covered with the beautiful flowers of poetry the degrading corruption of his thoughts, and the impure image entered into the hearts of men without hindrance, beneath the veil of words.

It was on account of the great dangers which poets expose men to that the celebrated philosopher Plato banished poetry from his republic. We, far from banishing genius, respect it like a sacred thing. We hold it to be not an ordinary fault, but a horrible sacrilege, the deplorable degradation of Godless poets; those who, possessed by a fierce boldness, despise the gentle and benevolent hand of our holiest Divine Religion. O you who, still youthful, feel the fire of poetry, and who aspire to join the perilous profession, take warning; if you wish to

avoid the numberless dangers and difficulties which are strewn in your path, impress on your own souls, in indelible characters, the great and sublime thoughts of Catholicism. Cast with firm hand on its shores the holy anchor of Faith, in order to be able afterwards to voyage without fear in the oceans of the world.

TENTH ARTICLE.

TENTH ARTICLE.

THE FINE ARTS.[1]

Influence of Catholicism on Music.

When our most Sacred and Divine Religion was established upon earth, all things were tending towards what appeared inevitable ruin; but this universal Divine Institution came to raise humbled nature from the dust and out of the degradation into which it had been sunk.

In the beginning Religion was despised, persecuted, humbled and even repulsed, and was fain to escape from the clutches of her cruel enemies.

Her beloved children had to fly to the deserts for concealment, or to the obscurity of the Catacombs, while others were loaded with chains and dragged to gibbets which were crimsoned with blood. Hence she could not fully occupy herself with anything but with the sanctification of souls, which in truth was her principal mission. But no sooner did she engraft within the depths of souls the Divine Idea, than it fructified and developed, producing divers splendours. Not satisfied with merely bestowing

[1] The Fine Arts comprise Music, Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, of which I shall treat successively.

splendour on the Sciences and the Arts, she communicated to them something of her Divinity. In regard to the Art of Music, which we purpose treating upon in this article, far less than any of the other Arts could it at first develop and unfold.

During the terrible persecutions which the Church endured, what chants could possibly be used by her but that interior melody, those smothered sighs which the soul exhales when elevating itself towards heaven? But when Christianity came forth out of the obscurity of the Catacombs, driving Paganism out of the Temples and breaking its profane Idols, and even from within the palaces of the Cæsars, who were fast becoming converted to Catholicism, she raised her voice to entone hymns of triumph and gratefulness.

Then when the Church commenced to widen her sphere, and when she unfolded the powerful constitution which had been given her by her Divine Founder, she fully comprehended the importance of music, and the need of a method which should be in unison with the Holy Beliefs she was teaching the nations. This grand work was commenced by St. Ambrose, continued by St. Gregory, and brought to perfection by Guido d'Arezzo. This, in brief, is the origin of Plain Chant from which modern music has sprung, and which is itself, in its turn, indebted to our Holy Religion for its most notable inspirations. But as Plain Chant has been specially adopted by the Catholic Church throughout the world, we shall treat principally about this beautiful style.

The grave, slow measure of Plain Chant perfectly harmonises with the elevated, austere doctrines of the Catholic religion, as well as the imposing majesty of its cultus. For all its religious acts our Holy Church has its individual chants, in which is found a continuous unanimity which ought not to be a subject of surprise to any one. It is always the soul that sighs in this vale of tears, "*in hac lacrymarum valle*," and which anxiously yearns for the eternal joys of the blessed life.

We shall proceed to give a brief sketch of the chants of the Church, following the liturgical year. On commencing the liturgical year, little does the Church chant, because it represents the holy fervour and the expectation of the Messias; and let no one doubt it, this expectation is a silent one. After this we hear music of a melodious langour; these are the sighs of the soul, and the cries of desire.

These cries and sighs have been rising from the earth for more than four thousand years, and they have ascended even to touching the vaulted heavens. The Seraphim repeat them in their celestial concerts in presence of the Almighty, and they return to earth loaded with the precious and magnificent treasures of grace. The greatest and most excellent gift which the world has received from heaven is, undoubtedly, the living Son of God, the "*desired of all the peoples*," the true Messias. He has appeared among us, and the Church manifests her joy in its Divine songs. Let us keep it well in mind: this joy is calm, slow, moderate; it seems as though it lingered

in its transports of holy joy and extraordinary enthusiasm. A God is born, it is true, but it is a Man-God, loaded with our miseries and our infirmities. Some rays of the sun, which has filled the nations with refulgent light, have been manifested to the earth, and at the same time the Christian has partaken of its untold and holy rejoicing, like to material nature which wakens into life when the beautiful light of day sheds its rays over our fair earth.

Towards the end of His holy mission the Man-God enters into His sad and dolorous career, and the Church also mourns and suffers with Him. This holy Mother manifests in her solemn chants the ineffable sorrows, the mysterious anguish of the most patient Jesus. Above all, we find some passages of a most pathetic nature. Who can listen, unmoved, to the sublime chanting of the Passion of Jesus? The narrative of the historian—the cries of the excited populace—the replies of the calumniated Just One, at once so tranquil and so sublime—form a truly Divine Drama. Who is there that can listen without taking part in the vivid and vehement sorrows of the most holy Virgin at the foot of the Cross, on hearing that chant, so impressive, of the "*Stabat Mater dolorosa*"? Blessed! a thousand times blessed may our Divine Religion be for having imprinted on her magnificent chants that feeling which none other can even imitate.

The Church, always compassionate towards the sorrows of her children, has comprehended, in an extreme degree, what passed in the soul of the *Mater*

dolorosa. Who can listen to the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremias without feeling an indescribable sadness piercing into the very depths of his soul? When those strong cries of grief resound within the vast precincts of a great Basilica well-nigh deserted, we feel as though we were standing in the midst of that Jerusalem once so populous, "*plena populo*," and now so desolate. After these cries of lamentation the Church keeps a profound silence, as though exhausted by the great and repeated efforts of deepest pain. We no longer hear even the sound of the bell; it is the silence of death. All things are hushed around the sepulchre wherein was laid our Divine Redeemer. And while the faithful, gathered together in the gloom and silence of the Temple, are engaged in prayer, and shedding abundant tears over Jesus in repose, lo! a great prodigy is worked—"*The Lord has risen*—'*non est hic*' —*do not seek Him in the Sepulchre*". At this instant everything is changed to joy and gladness in the bosom of the Catholic Church throughout the whole Universe, and the "*Alleluia*," which we shall repeat, for all eternity, in Heaven after the universal resurrection, has already commenced to be heard upon earth, with the resurrection of the Crucified. Carried in spirit with the Apostles unto the mountain from whence Jesus ascended to His high and excellent throne of glory, the Church manifests in her songs an extraordinary joy on beholding those beautiful Heavens opened which are to be, at some future day, her eternal and happy dwelling-place.

Who does not admire those sublime and mysterious songs of the Catholic Church when celebrating the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles?

What deep recollection and reverence do we not observe in the house of the King of Heaven and of earth! On that lovely day we imagine ourselves to be in the Cœnaculum, because we instantly picture to ourselves those heroic men, filled with a Divine Fire, who went forth with admirable courage and intrepidity to effect the difficult task of converting the nations, submerged as they were in the most complete barbarism.

What joy do we not experience when our Holy Church celebrates the glory of those who are in the highest joy, in the infinite bosom of God! What songs of triumph and of rejoicing do we intone on that day! How gladly does it not please our holy Mother, the Church, to open her maternal arms on beholding such a multitude, which no man can number, of the faithful in the Heavens! Yet as all souls do not immediately enter the celestial country, but many have to go first to the place of expiation called Purgatory, the Church makes an especial commemoration for them on the day following the Feast of All Saints. What touching supplications, what chants of prayer and intercession does not our Divine Religion send up to the Throne of Divine Mercy for these blessed souls on that day!

It is indubitable that in Religion, as in Nature, our Lord and God has engraved on the heart of the Mother those affectionate feelings towards such of

her children as most require her loving care. During the Divine Office we imagine we hear the deep sighs of all those souls who, from the depths of the abyss, are imploring the Infinite Mercy to obtain their speedy entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The learned are not alone those who can appreciate the beauties of our religious music, because it is undoubtedly and essentially popular music. There are few, indeed, who do not find pleasure in joining their voices with those of the assembled congregation, when, beneath the vaulted roofs of the Temples, are intoned those sublime canticles which the inspired David joyfully addressed to God. A large number of persons are daily converted to Catholicism through the great attractions of her songs; and even in the conversion of savages religious songs exercise no less influence than the constant preaching of our virtuous missionaries. And among our own selves, is not sometimes the most moving and persuasive eloquence the eloquence of our songs? The heart which sighs before the image of the Blessed Virgin, or before a statue of the Divine Child, experiences an emotion which in vain it had sought for in the sweetest harmonies of secular or profane music.

If, as we have proved, our Divine Religion exercises a powerful influence on vocal music, its influence is no less great over what is called instrumental music. In truth the Catholic Religion is the only one that suggests to the intelligence of man its grandest and most powerful inspirations, and to his heart the most noble sentiments, which, while they elevate him,

sustain him in those loftier regions wherein are formed the greatest of true Artists. Man, fragile and limited, can do no good if left to his own powers; hence, when finishing those instruments of music, so highly tuned and so harmonious, he ought to humble himself, and pitting his pride against his littleness, exclaim: "Lord! to Thee I owe everything. I give Thee thanks, Supreme Creator, for so many and such benefits. What could I have effected, Merciful God! unless Thy Divine Light had illumined my weak intelligence?" In this way do the humble speak, and on account of their humility God renders their intelligence like to shining lights, whilst the proud fall into the fathomless abyss into which their own fierce pride has cast them!

Another beautiful thing in our Temples is the bell. We can well compare it to the human voice; because, in the same way as the voice resides in the superior part of the human frame, so also is the bell found in the superior part of the Catholic Temple, in order to teach her numerous progeny to lift up their hearts to the King of Heaven and of Earth by means of prayer. We may also compare the bell to a fond mother, who rejoices or becomes saddened with her children; at times she commands, at others she counsels them. The bell becomes sad or rejoices with men; it seems to command, as when, on festival days of obligation, it lifts up its voice, summoning all the faithful to come and be present during the ineffable sacrifice of the Mass. It counsels us

when, at the dawn of day, at midday, and at nightfall, it invites us, with its beautiful tones, to raise our hearts in prayer to the Queen of Angels and of men, and recite the *Angelus*. Perhaps there is no sound which so intimately touches our hearts as that of the bell. How often do we not hear it with joy and enthusiasm! How often does it not make us shed tears!

The organ is, by excellence, above all instruments the one most proper for singing the praises of our God and Lord. It admits of no comparison with any other for power, fulness and brilliancy. It is the sonorous voice of the Catholic Church, and like the echo of an invisible world which is symbolically manifested. Sometimes its tones excite us to contemplation, at others it fills us with a holy sadness, or, inflaming our hearts with a celestial ardour, raises us to the beautiful and resplendent regions of the Infinite Being, and in the midst of our transports we feel as though we were among the choirs of angels.

It would be too wearisome to treat in these pages of each instrument in particular, and, therefore, as it is not necessary to our purpose to do so, we shall omit the recital, simply saying in general that, whatever their origin may be, our Holy Religion can adopt them for her service, imparting to some those sweet and touching accents which fill us with true enthusiasm, and to others those strong sounds, full and penetrative, which this Divine Teacher knows how to communicate to the beautiful human voice,

the principal organ of musical art. Very rarely does the Church employ instrumental music without using vocal music also. What magnificent effect is produced by this union! How they move and strengthen us, and elevate us to the Infinite Being! Who can listen unmoved to the chanting of the "*De Profundis Clamavi*"? Who does not weep with Jeremias when listening to his *Lamentations?* Who does not feel elated on hearing the grand *Symbol of the Catholic Faith?* Who does not sigh in supplication when reciting the Litanies? Who is not filled with a mystic joy when listening to the "*Gloria in Excelsis*," and with great tenderness in the "*Salve Regina*"? Who does not bow down to the ground and shed bitter tears on hearing the solemn chant of the "*Lacrymosa Dies Iræ*"? Most justly did St. Augustine say: "*How, deeply and greatly moved, did I weep with the sweet hymns and canticles of Thy Church! Then voices pierced mine ears, and the truth distilled into my heart, and desires filled it with ardour for piety, and the tears poured down my cheeks, and I was happy.*"[1]

There is yet another magnificent song heard in our Temples, which we cannot mention without the heart overflowing with joy; it is the "*Te Deum Laudamus*". Who can doubt of the excellence of this magnificent hymn, when, with unanimous voice, we lift up to the Most High the expressions of our acknowledgment and grateful feelings?

"It was enthusiasm that inspired the '*Te Deum*'.

[1] *Confessions*, Book 9, vi., Dr. Pusey's translation.

When, still on the plains, after a great victory has been achieved on the battlefields, amidst the still exploding shells, and the smoke and blood of the contest, to the warlike sounds of clarion and trumpets, an army, surrounded by the fire of the battle, bends the knee and entones the hymn of gratitude to the God of Battles; or else when, in the midst of lamps and burning tapers and incense clouds, the prolonged notes of the organ are heard, like sighs mingling with the joyous pealing of the bells and the low vibration of the bass, this hymn rises up, resounding and agitating the coloured windows of a grand Basilica, reverberating in its aisles and lofty cupolas—there is not a single man present but feels some movement of that delirious joy which Pindaro divinised in the woods of Olympus, and David in the Brook of Cedron."[1]

Were it not that I fear to be too diffuse, I would prove still further, and in a more extended manner, the great and extraordinary services which our Divine Religion has rendered to this beautiful Art; but I will simply offer a few observations, because to treat this subject in a due form would necessitate several volumes. Unbelievers and Sophists! if what has been advanced be not sufficient to convince you of the powerful influence of Catholicism upon music, you can open the brilliant pages of the history of music, and you will at once find the celebrated names of the Jesuit Fathers Kircher, Artega and

[1] Chateaubriand.

Eximeno; of the Monks Guido d'Arezzo, Nasarre Martin, Flecha, and Sola; of the Abbots Ceroni and Baini, standing in the first ranks as illustrious and enlightened masters, as also stand St. Ambrose, St. Damasus, St. Isidore, St. Gregory and St. Eugenius. From whence but from the Catholic Church did the great Spanish artists Morales and De Victoria to Ripa, Doyagüe and Ledesma spring? Who was the master of Meyerbeer but the Abbot Vogler? Who of the great Rossini but Father Mattei? Where else but in the schools of music of our Holy Religion did the great composers derive their instruction, such as Gluck, Durante, Palestrina, the Canon John de Muris, the Priest and Salamantine Professor Salinas, as well as so many others whose magnificent works it would be an endless task to follow, but which, nevertheless, have astonished the world? Do not wonder then if, on terminating this article, we should proclaim that the whole Art of Music is due to the Catholic Religion, as being the only one that knows how to imprint and develop the Divine Thought on our limited human intelligences.[1]

[1] I will subjoin the names of the different schools of music which, under the shelter of the Catholic Church, were maintained in Italy during the eighteenth century: "*L'Ospedaletto*," "*Santo Onofrio*," "*Santa Maria*," "*Dei Poveri de Jesu*," "*Cristo*," "*Della Pietà*," and "*De Mendicanti*". To the Catholic Church is due also the origin of the style "*lirico-dramatico*". The first Opera which was represented in Rome in the year 1440 was called "*The Conversion of St. Paul*," and this was followed by others, taking their subjects from the Sacred Scriptures.

ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

Influence of Catholicism on Painting.

No one who is fairly versed in history, and who possesses a clear judgment, can deny that the genius of painting, like the genius of each of the other Arts, finds the most efficacious principles of its development in our Divine Religion. She supplies to the artist the two elements essential to his work—God and the Creation. The ancient Pagans rejected Creation and necessarily destroyed Art; because, in the same way as Creation cannot exist without God, so also painting cannot exist without the Creation. If the whole Creation, with its immense extent, is no more than a perpetual dream, or a lengthened illusion of God, what superiority did these senseless men wish to impart to their work? Where seek for models to reproduce them? We no longer cease to wonder at all those monstrous forms of uncultured nations; but if, as we are already threatened, these same doctrines were to rule society—if from literature, wherein they have begun to be introduced, they were to pass on into the domain of art, we should have new dreamers who, beholding on all sides phantoms, would take pleasure in representing

the bizarre productions of their unhealthy imaginations instead of created objects.

Some dissenting sects have denied also to Catholicism its powerful influence over this beautiful art as regards the reproduction of sensible things. Do they perchance ignore that our Holy Religion is ever to man the efficacious principle of highest inspiration? Do they not know that were Catholicity destroyed, art, as a consequence, would perish, or at least be restricted in its most beautiful development? Every day do we see fanatical innovators who, in their darkened intelligences, imagine that it is pleasing to God to burn all the most beautiful master-works in painting. This is not because they deny the Creation, but because it appears to them to be very dangerous to faith, from the religious standpoint, this material reproduction of Creatures. "If you represent God and the Celestial Spirits," they say, "under a sensible form; if you place in Temples the image of Jesus, of the Virgin and of the Saints, you will infallibly open the door to the materialism and idolatry which invaded us on all sides in former times."

Blinded men! who cannot see that this representation of material objects is natural to our intelligence, and who do not understand that, by saying this, they accuse God Himself of materialism and idolatry. He reproduces Himself, up to a certain point, in the Creation; and numberless nations, forgetting the Supreme Creator, have adored Creatures. Very well; lift up your hand, extinguish this admirable

beacon, a lively image of the Eternal Sun, because men have adored it! And whereas there have been men who have prostrated themselves before created objects, let them therefore ignore the whole creation.

It is only to wandering minds that such a senseless idea could occur. Others there are who have fallen into the opposite error; for, despising the spiritual element, they have occupied themselves exclusively with the material element. Of these latter were the Greeks, who made painting to spring from the most sensual of all the passions.

It was reserved to our Divine Religion to supply to the art of painting the two elements, spiritual and material, which are most necessary, nay, indispensable. She combines them together in a most admirable manner, and establishes them with exact precision, according to the degree which the nature of each demands.

This great teacher tells us: There exists, *ab æterno*, a Supreme and Infinite Being, Creator of all contingent beings which tend to return to Himself. There also exists veritably a material substance, calculated to make an impression on the senses, and through which the Divine Thought always shines, more or less clearly, before the eyes of the intelligence. Reproduce, therefore, by means of art, spirit and matter; but bear in mind that all proceeds from the spirit, that in the spirit is alone found the true life, immutable; observe, also, that the material element is no other than a means which easily elevates us, and with the greater security, up to the Spiritual

Being, the only Being worthy of our love. In your works, therefore, the spirit will ever stand above the sensible phenomena; or rather matter will be nothing else but the transparent veil of the spirit, in order that, becoming impressed with so much beauty, the thought, unfolding its wings, should fly upwards, above the terrestrial regions, towards the Perfect Model, to Whom we ought to be perfectly united.

This is the reason why, in the imitation of created objects, Catholic art especially cultivates the reproduction of the human figure, because man alone is endowed with true intelligence upon earth. Behold, this is the reason why, in a certain sense, she pays little heed to the rest of the body, and employs greater care upon the head, in which is especially found the expression of the intelligence.

Not only does our Sacred Religion give the necessary elements to art, but she also presents to it highly finished models. The first of all models, the One which above all others we admire, and that fills us with enthusiasm, is the grand model of the Person of Jesus Christ. Our Holy Catholic Faith teaches us "that, in order to re-establish human nature, stained by sin, the only Son of God, equal to His Eternal Father, clothed Himself in our human nature, and united it to His Divine Nature, without confounding the one with the other". The Word made Flesh loaded Himself with all our miseries. For this reason He is represented to us lying in the Manger beneath the veil of infancy; or again, he is represented

to us compassionating our griefs and sicknesses ; or we see Him cruelly persecuted by those whom He has laden with benefits, and, lastly, expiring upon a shameful Cross, covered with insults, and enduring untold sufferings. But in whichever phase of His life we may find Him, we always see gleaming through the obscure mantle with which He willed to clothe Himself, some rays of His Sacred Divinity. There is a touching grace ever in his look, more particularly hovering around His Divine Lips, grave as truth, an attraction which transpierces and captivates the most rebellious heart. Such was the God-Man before His Divine Redemption. But after His resurrection the veil was drawn aside ; the material Form became spiritualised, and the resplendent rays of a superior Beauty darted out from His Transfigured Body.

After the Divine Master follow His Disciples, those men whom He sent throughout the world to continue His holy mission. Then did these hitherto rough, carnal-minded men begin, little by little, to become spiritualised in the high school of their most wise Master, and when their union with Him was consummated by the Holy Ghost, Who had also joined eternally and in an infinite manner the Son to the Father, they also appeared as though they themselves had participated in the Divine Nature.

We quickly perceive on this same heavenly pathway an innumerable multitude of martyrs, of all ages and conditions of life, some standing with

extraordinary intrepidity before the tribunals of their cruel persecutors; others carrying, with holy love, heavy chains, and enduring their great sufferings with unheard of resignation, languishing in some obscure prison; others ignominiously thrown into the arena, to serve as prey to ferocious wild beasts, and as a criminal plaything to an insolent populace. Yet in all, and in each, we perceive that wonderful union of humility and greatness of soul, of sweetness and firmness, of all those noble virtues which are learnt in the great school of the Redeemer of the human race. They rise to heaven, bearing in their hands the palm of victory. Their blood is converted into a brilliant purple, and in their wounds shines a celestial glory. And how speak of the Holy Pontiffs and blessed Doctors of the Church, who fill such an important place in the spiritual edifice which Jesus Christ has founded, and of which He is the Corner Stone! Their looks are ever directed towards heaven, from whence they have received their inspiration; there flows from the heart of each a fountain of peace, that, like to an abundant river, renders souls fruitful in good works, and makes virtue to germinate. Unbelievers and Rationalists! you who maintain that you are so intelligent, and who can so well describe your *Goddess Reason*, compare these magnificent models with those that have been bequeathed to us by Paganism, and afterwards tell us which side claims superiority.

Above all secondary types derived from the incomparable model of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and which

also belong to our Holy Religion, is found that of the Blessed Virgin. In ancient times woman was nothing else but a miserable slave. By taking flesh in the womb of a virgin, the Eternal Word raised the dignity of woman. Who is not charmed on beholding the Daughter of Nazareth by the side of her Divine Son? She is truly the woman according to the Spirit. Ideal beauty has purified to such a degree in her the material envelope, that never has it been marred by a sensual look. A miraculous flower, rising above the earth, surrounded by a mysterious light which conceals her to the eyes of the carnal minded, she manifests herself to the interior gaze of the soul. All things are at once acknowledged in her: the benevolent affability of the Mother of men, and the august dignity of the Mother of God.

Let me again ask of unbelievers and of sophists, "Where will you meet with any model to equal this? Is it in Paganism? Pagan models do not produce in our souls the smallest impression."

Bear in mind that the great Patriarch whom we see upon the mountain lifting up his hand to sacrifice his beloved Son is the Father of all believers, and the model of a perfect obedience.

That Man-God Whom we behold receiving in a manger the adoration of the Shepherds or of the Magi, or conversing with His disciples familiarly like a friend with a friend, and later on expiring painfully upon a cross, is such with the sole object in view of saving us, and redeeming the whole world, since it

was for this that He came and suffered, and for this that He died in a most opprobrious manner on a cross.

That Mother whom we see with heart transpierced by the sword of sharpest pain, standing at the foot of the cross upon which her Divine Son is expiring, is the most perfect model of all Christian mothers. Those Apostles, those martyrs, virgins and confessors are our teachers, our comforters, our models, while that Heaven opened above their heads is calling upon us all to follow them. O Sacred and Divine Religion! may you be a thousand times blessed and praised, because in you has been perfectly represented the Image of Christ crucified, the Last Judgment, more awe-inspiring than the judgments of the earth, a Resurrection which manifests to us the proof of our own Spiritual resurrection and the pledge of our heavenly inheritance.

What a vast field for the genius of painting is presented to us by our Temples, the hallowed shrines of our holy Catholic faith! What lovely pictures do we see suspended upon their magnificent walls! What beautiful subjects may not the artist find in those noble Cathedrals and within the depths of those Sanctuaries wherein dwells the Holy of holies! What peace, what silence, at once so imposing and so pleasing, do we not observe in the mysterious spot in which man, elevating himself towards heaven, finds the great King of kings, Who humbled Himself to the very earth! In that House of God and of man our Divine Religion explains her

holy Doctrines, her saintly Liturgy to her beloved children, to rich and to poor alike.

Let us listen to the words of an eminent writer, expressed with all that authority and power which his virtue and his science impart to them.[1]

"When we hear it asserted that Christianity is an enemy to the arts one feels greatly astonished, because in an instant the forms are conjured up in the memory of such men as Michael Angelo, Raffaelle, Cerrachio, Dominico, Lesueur, Poussin, Lawton, and many other artists whose names alone would suffice to fill volumes."

Towards the middle of the ninth century the Roman Empire, invaded by the barbarians and torn asunder by heresy, became ruined on all sides. The arts in those days found no other asylums but such as the Christians and the orthodox Europeans granted to them. Theodosius exempted painters, in virtue of a special law, from paying tributes and taxes. The Fathers of the Church are loud in their eulogiums on painting. St. Gregory expresses himself on this subject in a manner worthy of remark: "*Vidi sæpius inscriptionis imaginem, et sine lacrymis transire non potui, cum, tam efficaciter, ob oculos poneret historiam;*" the Saint refers to a picture which represented the sacrifice of Abraham. St. Basil goes further, for he says that painters "*effect as much with their pictures as orators do by their eloquence*". A monk, called Methodius, in the eighteenth century painted

[1] Chateaubriand.

a picture of the Last Judgment, which was the cause of converting to the faith Bogoris, the King of the Bulgarians. The Priests had collected together in the College of the Ortodoxia in Constantinople the most beautiful library in the world and masterpieces of the Arts, among the latter being the Venus of Praxiteles, facts which at least prove that the founders of Catholic worship were not barbarians, destitute of taste, and given up to absurd superstitions.

This college was demolished by the Iconoclast Emperor, and its professors were burnt alive; and it was only at the grave risk of their lives that the Christians succeeded in saving the skin of the Dragon, measuring 120 feet, upon which had been written in letters of gold the works of Homer. The paintings in the churches became the prey of the flames. Some senseless, furious heretics, like the Puritans of Cromwell, destroyed by sword-thrusts the Mosaics of the Church of Our Lady of Constantinople and of the Palace of Blaquernas. Persecution reached such a height that it extended to the artists themselves, and they were prohibited, under pain of death, from continuing their pious labours.

The monk Lazaro had the courage to be a martyr to his art. In vain did Theophilus order that his hands be burnt, so that he should be prevented from handling the pencil. Concealed in the subterranean parts of the Church of St. John the Baptist, he painted with mutilated fingers the great Saint, whose suppliant he was, and truly worthy was he of becoming the "Patron of Painters," and of being

acknowledged as such by that sublime family which the ardent breath of genius raises above the common crowd.

In the Empire of the Goths and of the Lombards Christianity continued to stretch out to talent her protecting hand. These efforts are more especially perceptible in the churches constructed by Theodoricus, Luitprand and Didier. The same spirit of Religion inspired Charlemagne, since the Church of the Apostles raised by order of this great Prince in Florence is held even at the present day as a monument of sufficient merit.

Lastly, towards the end of the thirteenth century the Christian Religion, after having wrestled with thousands of obstacles, returned in triumph to bring back to the world the Choir of the Muses. All things worked together for the welfare and prosperity of the churches, sheltered as they were by the protection of the Sovereign Pontiffs and of pious Princes. Bouchet, a Greek by origin, was the first architect; Nicholas the first sculptor, and Cimabue the first painter, who exhumed out of the ruins of Greece and Rome rare and interesting antiquities. Since that time the arts progressed in the hands of various masters until the pontificate of Pope Leo X., in whose reign shone, like two bright constellations, Raffaelle and Michael Angelo.

Why should we hesitate to say it? During this epoch of such sad memories a disastrous revolution made the Fine Arts fall away to a very considerable degree. Painting descended from the celestial

regions to which it had been elevated by our Holy Faith, and deteriorated into a gross materialism. Various schools were founded in Germany, Flanders, France, Italy and Spain. On mentioning the three last we cannot resist recording with pride the names of Murillo, Velasquez, Zurbaran, Claude Lorrain and many others, who, under the protection of Catholicism, have superseded other painters, and shone with éclat and greatness.

Unbelievers and Rationalists! you ought, like we do, to acknowledge that wherever the Catholic Religion is founded and propagated the Fine Arts always succeed and flourish.

Although it may be hard for you to hear this, historic truth is always above vain reason. Acknowledge, then, your own littleness and misery.

Artists! fly from those false prophets who are constantly announcing that our dissolution is near at hand. Consult them, if it so pleases you; you will not find in their perverse doctrines anything but an universal scepticism. Doubt can never strengthen the pencil in your hand, nor will it ever produce noteworthy works.

TWELFTH ARTICLE.

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Influence of Catholicism on Sculpture.

It is not my aim to develop this subject fundamentally, because all that we have advanced in respect to painting may very well be applied, in a general sense, to sculpture. We shall, therefore, not repeat, but will add some considerations, and a few fresh proofs, in order to confirm the great influence which Catholicism exerts on this beautiful art.

It is an evident fact (and one which none may doubt) that the first and most beautiful form which the universe ever beheld was that creation which came so perfect from the Hands of the Supreme Artificer when, in Paradise, He said: "*Let us make man to our image and likeness*".[1]

It is easy to understand the great influence which our Holy Religion exercises over the beautiful art of sculpture. It is indubitable that the interior of a Temple which is appropriated to the ceremonies of Religion is the most favourable medium for the development and display of sculpture. In the spaces left vacant by the pictures, on the tops of the columns, around the large window, upon the

[1] Gen. i.

numerous cross-bars, so well calculated and disposed for sustaining them, and which cause such a variety in their beautiful shapes, within the highest parts of the vaulted arches, what magnificent statues and sculptures of all descriptions do we not meet with! On one spot, perchance, we find garlands of flowers that Faith wove together to offer to the Author of Nature. By their side we behold vanishing forms, the emblems of our virtues, and which, as though they had been rays from the Sun of Justice, wherein they had their birth, soar up to heaven, sustained by the hands of Angels. There are also seen horrible forms; these latter are representations of our vices.

As the immediate and inevitable consequence of these is to humble the intellectual creature, by placing him on a level with the inferior beings, Christian art has had the happy thought of representing them to us under the form of realistic or fantastic animals. They stand there in order to inspire men with horror, who debase their high dignity by delivering themselves up to the follies of the world. At the head of this troop of degraded beings is found Satan, the type of evil and of suffering. We see him flung on the ground, creeping along the earth like a vanquished enemy, and frequently is he represented under most loathsome forms. All these symbols of horror and of degradation are executed to perfection. This contrast, so great between physical beauty and moral decadence, produces astonishment, and suggests motives of deep meditation.

The work of sculpture by degrees becomes more salient from the walls, where it had commenced, and becoming more developed, attains those admirable proportions which God has conferred on the human form. Beneath this form, with something celestial to enhance it, we see the holy Apostles still announcing to us in the Temple the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Close to the Baptismal Font stands the Angel of Mercy, that Blessed Spirit who invisibly directs and opens the current of grace to flow over the souls stained by original sin. By the side of the Tabernacle is seen the Angels of Recollection and of Prayer. Behind the Altar we find the Queen of Angels, Mary most holy. When we approach to this Divine Mother we see her so beautiful, as she opens her arms, inviting us, with her ineffable smile, to place ourselves in all confidence under her care and protection.

It is often found necessary to place delicate paintings in the interior of Temples, but this is not necessarily the case with sculpture, for it can defy the inclemency of the seasons.

Let us leave the Temple and we shall still find this art enhancing the vast edifice, working, animating, as it were, and extending to all the inert parts of that building movement, life, thought itself. Here we see the Creation; further on the Patriarchs and the Prophets; in another spot we find the Birth of Jesus Christ, and all the events of His exemplary Life and Sacred Passion. The imposing spectacle of the Last Judgment also presents itself to our

gaze, and incites us to implore the Divine Mercy in this hallowed edifice wherein He has fixed His permanent Abode. All things are admirably blended together; all things are arranged with order and intelligence. In another part of the noble Basilica is found represented the history of Man and the history of Religion, engraved by art upon the Temple of the Lord to attract the most enthusiastic hearts, and inspire in them greater respect and veneration.

There is also a sacred spot which is intimately united with the Temple, if not by its actual and material nearness, at least by a moral proximity; it is the last resting-place of our beloved dead. In every place, and at all times, man has always believed in the existence of a new life after death; in all lands and in every age, even among savage tribes, it has been the custom to gather together and preserve the mortal remains of the dear departed ones with all solicitude.

But it is the Holy Catholic Religion which engraves in the deepest manner on the soul the belief in immortality; it is she who by her beliefs, her expiatory ceremonies, brings to the mind of the living the remembrance of the dead. From this proceeds, especially among ourselves, the cultus of the sepulchres. The village cemetery perhaps produces in the heart the deepest emotion. In this spot Nature, ever young and fertile, hastens, like a careful mother, to cast her mantle of verdure and flowers over the objects of our sorrow. We may observe only some wooden crosses, and in their

midst, perchance, rises a larger cross, which marks the grave of the pastor of that village, who seems to be watching in death, as he did in life, over the flock confided to his care, awaiting the general resurrection.

In the burial places of the cities there is not that simplicity of Nature, that equality of death, which makes the heart feel restful when weary of the fatigues and of the injustices and trials of life; but, on the other hand, what admirable works have been effected by sculptors. The works of sculpture have something of death and of life in them; it is Christianity in the field of repose.

Let us look at the sepulchres of every shape and form of grandeur clustering around the Cross, which still spreads its Arms and shelters them with its shadow! How often do we see a mother, in deepest grief, placing lovely flowers on the remains of a loved daughter. Close to her is a boy of tender years, who yet ignores the mysteries of death, as he also ignores those of life, and who plays with the very flowers cast upon his sister's grave. A little further on we meet two sisters who are inconsolable at the death of a brother who was all their felicity. With eyes bent towards Christ nailed on the Cross, they seem to be saying to Him, as on another occasion the sisters of Lazarus did say to Him: "Lord, if you had favourably listened to our prayer, our brother would not have died". And the Divine Master, always merciful, replies to them in the consoling, expressive words of the Catholic Faith:

"Your brother is not dead: he sleeps!" In effect, Death is not a horrible, dismal Spectre, such as Paganism has conceived it to be; it is a Sleep, beautified by the Divinity. Peace reigns over that transparent, immovable form. That body, on the verge of crumbling to dust, seems but to be awaiting, with impatience, the sound of the trumpet to quit this miserable dust, and fly to the great Tribunal of the Sovereign Judge of the living and of the dead, from whence souls that are pure are carried to enjoy eternal bliss.

THIRTEENTH ARTICLE.

THIRTEENTH ARTICLE.

Influence of Catholicism on Architecture.

The origin of the beautiful art of architecture dates as far back as the first ages of the world. However, on treating of this art we shall, for the sake of brevity, commence with the architecture of the Romans.

In their first epochs of glory the Romans did not greatly shine in the culture of the Fine Arts. During that time, which we may call primitive, other affairs occupied their minds.

Their principal enterprise was the founding of the Eternal City, and the subjecting to their dominion all the nations on the face of the globe; thus from so remote a period preparing the vast comprehensive unity of the Christian family, which our Sacred and Divine Religion was to consummate, and to which we owe so much greatness.

The roads which the Romans formed; the aqueducts, the bridges erected for the service of their armies and to facilitate in every way their victorious march; the lofty columns, the triumphal arches under which all the conquered nations marched who were unable to proceed to bend their knee before the capitol; their theatres, their palaces and porticos;

the sumptuous villas to which the wealthy Romans betook themselves when fatigued with the triumphs and conquests effected, in order to rest and give themselves up to idleness and pleasure; the Basilicas, that class of Temples wherein the Roman magistrature, those "Gods of the Earth," interpreted the law and distributed justice—such was the architecture that chiefly occupied their time. Generally speaking, there was not much delicacy or elegance in these erections, but, on the other hand, there was a solidity which was above all doubt. Participating, in a certain sense, of the destinies of the Eternal City, these monuments appear to possess an imperishable durability.

Uncertain of the true Faith, the Romans, in place of dedicating themselves to religious architecture, allowed each vanquished city its Religion and its Temples. They nevertheless erected many sacred edifices, and as they had adopted the religion and philosophical conceptions of the Greeks, they likewise adopted their architecture, but in this they effected some important modifications. In the first place, they raised it to noble and bold proportions —so great was their ideal of the Majesty of the Imperial City. This modification consisted either in altering the elegance, the exquisite delicacy, the harmony of the Greek Temple, or else in imparting to it a grandeur and dignity well worthy of its destiny.

With the object of communicating to their religious edifices something of the stability which they conceived they had on earth, they introduced the dome

so necessary in their vast constructions. This vault or dome did not possess the elegance of the Greek "*Columniata*," nor of its architrave; but they sought to imitate the vaulting of the heavens; and thus it came about that this was the origin of new and beautiful designs in architecture, and was the first example of the sublime cupola of our immense and splendid Basilicas.

The first Christian assemblies were held in secret. The Faithful, persecuted as they were by the blindness of the Jews, by the pride of philosophers and by the policy of the Cæsars, performed their religious rites, in the first instance, within the interior of their dwellings. As the members of this Christian community began to increase considerably, wishing to impart to the cultus some solemnity, yet compelled on the other hand to fly from their cruel enemies, they took refuge in the interior of the Catacombs. Some portions of the sculptures which subsequently were discovered clearly demonstrate that the mysteries of our Holy Catholic Faith had been celebrated in these subterranean places. After three centuries of bloody persecution, Constantine restored peace to the Church of Christ. With the assistance of this powerful Protector, and by the effects of that Divine virtue which always exists in the Church, the Christian Religion began to extend to the confines of the Empire with extraordinary rapidity. Then the Church had to assign to her children for Divine Worship buildings which had been previously used for other rites, but which were modified and

adapted to the requirements of our Holy Religion. After the modifications had been carried out, these transformed Temples were made to serve as models for the first churches erected by Faith, thus making the architecture of the Pagans of use to the Christian worship. Never have these primitive models been lost sight of altogether, although they departed somewhat from them. From the successive changes which took place there originated the *Roman Architecture*, so well adapted to the grave and simple character of Christianity in its first ages. The "*pleno-arco-Romano*" becomes joined to the Greek, considerably altered in its proportions. Sustained by its own solidity, sheltered beneath the powerful wings of the Catholic Religion, essentially conservative, the first monuments of the Faith of our Fathers are found still in considerable numbers even in our land.[1] Time has mutilated them, it is true, but it has also been able to impart to them more than it has taken away, because time has cast over them that peculiar shade, the tint of ages, which imparts to these monuments a grand beauty.

However noteworthy may have been this first fruit of our architecture, it cannot yet be called the complete manifestation of the Christian idea, which became fully developed at the period dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth century in the Church, and which is improperly called Gothic. All the parts of the building develop in a surprising manner; the

[1] The author here refers to Spain.

edifice extends and becomes elevated. The world would fain say that some celestial intelligence had become incarnate in the mass to animate it: "*mens agitat molem*". From age to age the vault continues to rise; it rises in an endless way and without bounds. It would seem as though the two parts of which it is composed could never have united together had it not been necessary to shelter the faithful, who, to their sorrow, were still to be retained on earth. But, nevertheless, the two arches of the vault are discovered at a great height, and after becoming united they seem to still wish to soar higher, and become elevated, as though drawn by a celestial loadstone towards that magnificent vault which God Himself had formed.

Yet when the edifice is roofed in the artist does not rest here. Leaping step by step he raises towers and spires, as though he wished his work not to belong to earth; it is the counterpart of the Tower of Babel. When raising the Tower of Babel, rebel man intended to liberate himself from the just punishments of a vengeful God, while the faithful Christian, on elevating the Towers of the Catholic building, assumes to approach to a God Who is merciful and Who rewards. Those weather-vanes and spires and turrets impart to our cities, as well as to our fields, a grand religious character never possessed by the buildings of antiquity. Elevated above all earthly objects, the bell tower is like to the finger of Religion, our Divine Mother, who lovingly reminds her numerous children of the great and excellent

thoughts of eternity, and the tranquil, smooth road to heaven.

When, after, perchance, taking a long ramble across country, we approach a spot were men have fixed their residence—be it near a wooded part, or on the declivity of a hill—the church is the first object which attracts our attention. What thoughts, so full of comfort, are awakened at that instant within our hearts, troubled, perchance, as they may be at the time, by the tumult of the passions! Here is where the sacred bell lifts its pious accents towards heaven on our behalf. Its mysterious voice proclaims to the Holy Church our spiritual regeneration.

Yet this was not sufficient to give to the grand and sumptuous building that lightness and elevation which the Christian conception demanded.

On the exterior, as in the interior of the Temple, among the columns of the nave and the choir, above the principal façade, on all sides, up in the towers, the most elevated portions of the building, in all places, even those where the most penetrative eye could scarcely reach, the Catholic artist has represented, with admirable profusion, men and animals, flowers and plants, and countless creatures of all kinds, in imitation of the Supreme Creator, Who has peopled, with beings of all descriptions, the different parts of the universal globe.

Christian architecture suffered a new and important modification at the epoch which was called the *Renaissance*. The faith of the first ages, that lively faith, ardent, and which, as though it had been

banished from the earth, was impatient of reaching heaven in order to carry to God all that belonged to Him—that faith, we repeat, became weakened in a considerable manner. On the one hand, the works of antiquity were studied with great zest; and, as they had been for a long time despised, the study excited a universal admiration. On the other hand, faith, which was still rooted in the depths of souls, did not permit of so sudden a change. An alliance was formed between Ancient and Christian art. The elegant and pure lines of the Greek Temple were imitated, but at the same time the rich and varied ornaments of the Gothic Church were preserved.

But one thing we must acknowledge. Christian art produced at this epoch very notable works, which we offer to the intelligent in art as new titles of glory. The drawing is most pure and correct; the execution leaves nothing to be desired; the vault, on widening, imitates better than the diagonal arch the immense vault of the heavens. But the Catholic edifice has lost much in other ways. That half light, so favourable to prayer and meditation, appears to have become dispelled. That rich variety in all the productions of nature disappears day by day. Those high, delicate columns, crowned with capitals which are so beautifully varied, and placed in profusion in the Temple, in the manner of trees planted in a garden—those columns have been put more apart and lower, and let us say it, they remind us overmuch, by reason of its similarity, of the

uniform work of man. The curves of vaults have been arrested, and in place of rising in an endless manner, and of elevating the thoughts and desires of men, incline towards the earth. Placed upon that inclined plane art decreases rapidly, and the Greek Temple takes the place, in a certain manner, of the Christian Temple.

Thus it is evident that, when once the cultus is provided for and assured, architecture will always work what it judges best. Statues and windows, flowers, arabesques, cornices and capitals and bass-reliefs—all things does architecture combine harmoniously, according to the logarithm which is appropriate. From this results the prodigious variety of magnificent buildings, in the construction of which we find so much order, symmetry and beauty. The trunk of the tree is immutable, its branches and foliage are alone diverse and varied.

Should incredulity ask us, "Who gave the plan for the creation of such marvellous Basilicas?" our answer would be a very easy one. It is Faith, assisted by Genius; it is those Bishops and Priests, all those men who are powerful on account of their great intelligences, and more powerful still on account of their extraordinary zeal and their religious enthusiasm, those who have formed our modern societies, like to the bees, that work and form their hives. Retired from the busy throng of men, and dwelling in the most arid deserts and in the vastest solitudes, these men have studied and profoundly meditated on the teaching of our most Sacred

Religion; they have contemplated for a long time, through the Divine prism of the Faith, all the marvels of Nature; and they have known also how to cast, from time to time, an observant look upon the productions of ancient art, whose beautiful deposits they alone possessed. When these different elements had become combined by reflection and elevated by inspiration, then there came forth, by degrees, those notable forms which many believe had been brought to earth by supernatural and Divine intelligences.

The earth is not for the Christian what it was for the Greeks, who ever yearned for the pleasures of this world, towards which they were drawn by a religion of delights. To the Christian it is a place of expiation and of trial, where he is found weeping and suffering, until, forsaking his perishable body, his soul may go forth to the peaceful and sweet abode of eternal felicity. Behold the reason why man, here below, views this earth as though enveloped in an obscure mist like to a funereal crape. Man cannot tell how often the arm of Divine Justice has been laid upon him; nevertheless, the memory of a terrible punishment will never be effaced from the mind. I mean the Universal Deluge. The just man Noe, the only one, the hope of the human race, was alone preserved in the Ark, together with all his family. The perversity of the new world was not long before it equalled the perversity of the old world, and a punishment yet more heavy, in truth an eternal condemnation, threatened him, until the Son of God

came to redeem and to save us, and to reconcile erring man to His Heavenly Father. The Cross is the means whereby He has fully made satisfaction to the Eternal Father. The infinite merits of His Precious Blood are daily applied to us. Although He superabundantly satisfied the Divine Justice for our sins, yet He also wished that the merits of the Holiest Virgin should be applied to us. Hence all these magnificent and sublime ideas are found enclosed, so to say, and materially realised in our beautiful Christian Basilicas, which are so many more titles of glory that are added to the innumerable number with which our holy Catholic Faith has enriched us.

When we penetrate within this vast circuit, we breathe an atmosphere so pure and so tranquil that it calms our senses and deadens our passions. The paleness of the evening, the shadows which fall from the numerous high pillars, remind us of the fading away of nature, obscured after sin. Life and death, hope and fear, holy joys and the mysterious sadness of the soul, form in this sacred spot, by their indefinable tones, an atmosphere which leads us away from all terrestrial objects, and raises our minds to the contemplation of heavenly mysteries, symbolised by these material sculptures.

We recognise above our heads the image of the ancient Ark which saved man at the time of the Deluge, as well as that of the Spiritual Ark which so happily carries us over the waves of this world, and "*out of which there is no salvation*". The two

doors, on crossing each other, remind us of the precious instrument of Eternal Health. Those saints, those celestial spirits who incessantly plead for us, reverently placed around the tabernacle; those altars, so worthy of veneration, and which seem to turn towards the central spot wherein resides, hidden from our view, the All-powerful and our Redeemer; all in that holy fane impels us to remember the Christian Doctrine in relation to the regeneration of the human race stained by sin.

We behold the majestic and magnificent procession as it wends its way along, in all recollection, preceded always by the Cross, to which our Saviour gave the power and the virtue of reparation. When it leaves the sanctuary the priest proceeds along the principal nave; in all the parts of the building does he penetrate, inviting the faithful and the celestial choirs to join in his prayers; then he returns to consummate the sacrifice on the spot whereon the Victim will descend, and which gives to the Temple its form, its virtue, and its glory.

It is an indubitable fact that Catholic architecture had derived much profit from the intelligent works of former times, and that the admixture of the various styles of ancient eras had entered into architecture as an important element in the erection of our churches. In them we actually recognise the Roman vault intimately joined to the Greek "Collum". Each style has, perchance, lost somewhat of its primitive beauty, but the whole has gained by the fulness of the effect, by this vague sentiment of the Infinite,

which it ever pleases us to experience in the presence of God. We also observe and avow the hidden Tabernacle of the Temple of Solomon, and the Cherubim prostrated before the sweet Majesty of the Holy of Holies. The subterranean temples of Egypt and of India are represented by the shadowy, sad crypts which are sometimes seen in churches. These crypts remind us also of the Catacombs, in which the primitive Church celebrated the holy mysteries. Beautiful and wholesome thought! This Divine Mother and indefatigable Teacher of Truth says to the Christian faithful, as she does to the society of the whole human race: "Remember that you proceed from the earth, that the splendour which you enjoy in this exile is none else but a glory that is lent to you, and which will disappear when the realities of the invisible world shall replace the vanities and illusions of this miserable, perishable earth".

Some, perchance, will ask us anew: "From whence, from what treasury was the wealth drawn for the acquisition of so many materials?" "From the inexhaustible treasury of the Catholic Faith!" we shall reply with joy and enthusiasm.

"What hands have gathered them together, to prepare them and to work them and to raise them up?" And we shall reply again: "Faith, holding as her staff and mainstay the powerful arm of the Christian people!"

THE END.

Laus Deo Semper.

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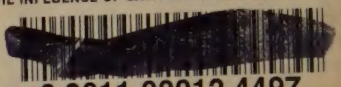
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